



## Digital Legal Awareness Education for Santri at Darul Falah Islamic Boarding School in Efforts to Prevent Cyberbullying

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Corresponding Author:</b> Sutrisno <a href="mailto:sutrisno.sh@upnjatim.ac.id">sutrisno.sh@upnjatim.ac.id</a></p>	<p>Advancements in information technology have significantly impacted social behavior, including among the santri at Islamic boarding schools. On one hand, digital media serves as an effective tool for preaching, education, and communication. On the other hand, negative phenomena such as cyberbullying have emerged, which can lead to psychological, social, and even legal consequences. This community service initiative aims to provide digital legal awareness education to the santri of Darul Falah Islamic Boarding School, helping them understand the legal principles governing online activities under the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE) and equipping them with the skills to protect themselves from cyberbullying. The activities include legal counseling, interactive discussions, case studies, and understanding evaluations. The results of the program indicate a significant improvement in the santri's understanding of digital law concepts, relevant provisions of the UU ITE, and strategies for preventing cyberbullying. This initiative is expected to serve as a model for digital legal education within Islamic boarding schools, fostering an ethical, safe, and law-abiding social media culture aligned with Islamic values.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Digital Legal Awareness Education and Cyberbullying Prevention.</p>

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### INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology (ICT) over the past two decades has brought about profound changes in the way people interact, learn, and work. The internet is no longer just a communication tool; it has become a new living space for modern society. Widespread internet access and massive use of social media have made the digital space an integral part of social life, including for students (santri) at Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). According to the 2021 Indonesian Digital Literacy Index report published by the Ministry of Communication and Information, the national score reached 3.49 out of a scale of 5, indicating that the digital literacy level of the public is still in the "moderate" category, with digital security and ethics aspects being relatively weak (Ministry of Communication and Information, 2021). This suggests that, despite high access to technology, the ability to understand the risks and legal consequences in the online world remains limited.

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Social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and WhatsApp offer significant benefits for educational and dakwah (Islamic outreach) purposes. Santri in pesantren can use these digital platforms to spread Islamic values, access knowledge, and expand their social networks beyond the pesantren community. This digitalization also aligns with efforts to modernize Islamic education so that it can adapt to the Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0 eras. However, alongside these benefits, social media also opens up opportunities for misuse of information, hate speech, the spread of hoaxes, and other deviant behaviors if not accompanied by legal literacy and digital ethics. The lack of understanding in this area has led some users, including santri, to be unaware that simple activities on social media can have legal implications if they violate the rights of others (Rahmah & Abdullah, 2022).

Cyberbullying has become one of the most prevalent negative consequences of low digital literacy and weak legal awareness in society. Cyberbullying can take various forms, including insults, verbal harassment, sharing photos without permission, and threats made through electronic means. According to the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), in 2023 there were over 2,300 cases of violations of child protection laws, with the majority being cases of bullying, both physical and digital (KPAI, 2023). This trend shows that the online world is not yet a safe space, especially for teenagers and students who are active on social media but have not yet understood the legal consequences of their actions.

Santri, as part of Indonesia's youth generation, are also not exempt from this phenomenon. Pesantren are no longer just places for religious study, but have evolved into institutions that are adaptive to information technology. Many pesantren have adopted digital-based learning and encourage santri to engage in dakwah through social media. However, the reality shows that not all santri fully understand the ethics and legal responsibilities of using digital technology. The lack of legal education and digital awareness puts santri at risk of becoming both perpetrators and victims of cyberbullying. For example, mocking or spreading negative comments about others on social media could be classified as a violation under the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE) if it causes harm to another party (Harviani et al., 2024).

In the context of national law, the Indonesian government has provided a fairly comprehensive legal framework to regulate online activities through Law No. 11 of 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions (UU ITE). This regulation has undergone two revisions, with Law No. 19 of 2016 and most recently Law No. 1 of 2024. The law regulates various aspects, ranging from electronic transactions and content distribution to cybercrimes. In cyberbullying cases, the articles most commonly applied are Article 27 (3) on defamation and Article 28 (2) on the spread of hate speech based on SARA (ethnicity, religion, race, and inter-group relations). Violations of these provisions can result in criminal penalties of up to six years in prison and a fine of up to one billion rupiah (Ministry of Law and Human Rights, 2024).

The latest revision of UU ITE has also introduced important improvements. For example, previously ambiguous articles have been clarified to avoid excessive criminalization of internet users. Article 29 now explicitly regulates cyberbullying and threats of violence through electronic means, while the clarification of Articles 45A and 45B emphasizes sanctions for perpetrators while ensuring fairness and protection for victims (Kompas, 2024). This indicates that the government is starting to pay more attention to digital legal education and protection for internet users, including the youth. However, legal

regulations without public awareness remain ineffective, which is why an educational and preventive approach, particularly in educational institutions like pesantren, is essential.

From the perspective of legal education, increasing digital legal awareness is a strategic preventive step in shaping a law-abiding and responsible society in the digital space. Legal awareness not only means knowing the contents of the laws but also includes the ability to understand moral values, ethics, and social responsibility when using digital media (Putra & Rachmawati, 2021). In pesantren, digital legal education can be integrated with Islamic values that emphasize the importance of guarding one's speech (qaulan karīman), avoiding slander (ghibah), and upholding the dignity of others. In this way, positive law and religious values can work hand in hand as the foundation for forming wise digital citizens.

Pesantren play an important role as centers for moral and ethical formation of the youth. Therefore, providing digital legal education to santri is an urgent need in the midst of increasing ethical and legal violations in the cyberspace. According to Suriani et al. (2023), cyberbullying legal counseling activities conducted in madrasahs have proven to increase students' legal awareness and their cautious attitudes toward using social media. This shows that a context-based educational approach can be an effective strategy for fostering digital legal understanding among santri.

In addition to being a preventive measure against legal violations, digital legal education also serves to protect santri from becoming victims of cybercrime. Many cases have shown that cyberbullying perpetrators often do not realize that their actions constitute legal violations, while victims may not know how to report or properly collect digital evidence (Adnan et al., 2024). Through digital legal training, santri are expected to be able to recognize various forms of cyber violations, understand their legal rights as citizens, and feel empowered to report any instances of cyberbullying.

Based on the background above, the community service activity entitled “Digital Legal Awareness Education for Santri at Darul Falah Islamic Boarding School in Efforts to Prevent Cyberbullying” is highly relevant. The main goal of this activity is to provide santri with an understanding of digital legal regulations under UU ITE, recognize various forms of cyberbullying, and equip them with practical skills to protect themselves from online crime. In this way, it is hoped that the santri will not only be smart in using technology but also possess high legal awareness, be ethical, and become agents of change in creating a safe, civilized digital ecosystem in accordance with Islamic values and positive law.

## METHODS

This community service activity employs an educative-participatory approach, actively involving the santri in each stage of the program. The activity was held at Darul Falah Islamic Boarding School over two days, with 60 santri participants from the Tsanawiyah and Aliyah levels.

The first stage was planning and preparation, which began with coordination with the pesantren leadership to determine the time, location, and participants for the event. The implementation team then conducted an initial survey using a simple questionnaire to assess the santri's knowledge of digital law and the UU ITE (Electronic Information and Transactions Law).

Based on the survey results, it was found that most of the santri lacked in-depth understanding of the laws regulating social media activities. From these findings, the team de-

veloped a counseling module containing explanations of important articles in the UU ITE, examples of cyberbullying cases in Indonesia, and instructions on how to report digital law violations.

The second stage was the main implementation of the activity, which was divided into three parts:

1. Digital legal counseling – The community service team provided explanations regarding the legal basis of UU ITE, the definition of cyberbullying, types of online harassment, and the legal consequences that can arise. The speakers explained the material using a contextual and interactive approach to help the santri understand the law in a practical and relevant way to their daily lives.
2. Discussion and case studies – The santri were divided into small groups and given a cyberbullying case scenario to analyze. Each group was tasked with identifying the responsible parties, determining the violated articles, and providing solutions based on the law and Islamic values. This activity encouraged critical thinking skills and cooperation among the santri.
3. Cyberbullying reporting simulation – The speakers demonstrated the procedure for reporting a cyberbullying case, including how to gather digital evidence, save screenshots, and file a report with authorities such as the police or the Ministry of Communication and Information.

The third stage was the evaluation of the activity, which was conducted by comparing the results of a pre-test and post-test to measure the increase in the santri's knowledge. The evaluation also included brief interviews with some participants and pesantren administrators to assess the effectiveness of the program and the potential for similar activities in the future.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the community service activity conducted at Darul Falah Islamic Boarding School show very positive outcomes in increasing digital legal literacy and awareness of the dangers of cyberbullying among the santri. Through a series of activities, including legal counseling, interactive discussions, case simulations, and evaluations based on pre-tests and post-tests, there was a significant improvement in the understanding of digital law. According to the measurements, 88% of the santri were able to accurately explain the definition of cyberbullying and provide examples of such cases on social media after the activity was conducted. Before the activity began, only 32% of the santri understood that actions such as insulting, defaming, or sharing someone's photo without permission were legal violations regulated under Law No. 11 of 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions (UU ITE). This change reflects a 56% improvement in legal understanding, emphasizing the effectiveness of the participatory educational approach based on active participant involvement.

This counseling activity was comprehensively designed by integrating various interactive and contextual legal learning methods, such as lectures, case studies, role-playing simulations, and open Q&A sessions. The main objective of this approach was to create a participatory learning environment where the santri were not only passive listeners but also actively engaged in understanding and applying legal principles in their daily lives.

During the legal lecture session, the speaker presented the legal foundations related to digital ethics and social media responsibility, particularly in relation to the UU ITE. The

material was delivered using simple and relevant language to ensure that the santri, most of whom are adolescents, could easily understand the concepts.

Next, the activity continued with case studies based on real-world situations in the digital space, such as cases of mocking comments, unauthorized sharing of personal information, and posts that lead to cyberbullying. Participants were asked to assess each case from both a legal and moral perspective, and discuss the potential legal consequences of such actions. For example, they were invited to analyze a social media post that mocked or degraded a friend, then assess whether the action could be categorized as a legal violation and which articles of the law could be used to hold the perpetrator accountable.

In the simulation session, some santri took on roles as perpetrators, victims, and mediators in cyberbullying cases. Through role play, participants were able to directly experience the emotional dynamics, social pressures, and legal consequences resulting from unethical behavior in the digital world. Observations made during the activity revealed an improvement in the reflective abilities and empathy of the santri. They showed newfound awareness of the need to be more cautious in their actions in the digital space, whether in creating posts or responding to others' content.

In addition to cognitive improvements, this activity also brought positive impacts on the affective and behavioral domains. In the group discussion session held after the counseling, most of the santri admitted that their perspective on social media usage had changed. They began to be more selective in making posts, sharing information, and commenting on digital platforms. The santri now understand that social media is not a limitless private space, but rather part of the public sphere, subject to legal norms, ethics, and social responsibilities.

This legal awareness further strengthened after key articles in the UU ITE were explained, such as Article 27 (3) on defamation and Article 28 (2) on the spread of hatred or hostility. This understanding fostered a collective awareness that violations of ethics on social media can lead to tangible legal consequences. Some santri even suggested that the pesantren establish a code of ethics for social media usage, which would provide moral and legal guidance for all members of the pesantren, including santri, teachers, and administrators.

This suggestion reflects a shift from theoretical understanding to the internalization of legal values in their social lives. The santri now view law not as a tool for punishment, but as a moral guideline that ensures harmony within the community. Thus, this counseling activity not only successfully enhanced the legal knowledge of the santri but also shaped critical, responsible, and ethical attitudes toward digital technology usage both within the pesantren and in the wider society.

From an Islamic values perspective, this activity also successfully integrated positive law with Islamic moral principles. During the reflection session, the santri realized that digital legal norms are substantially aligned with Islamic teachings. Allah's command in QS. Al-Hujurat verse 11, which forbids Muslims from insulting, mocking, or labeling others with bad names, serves as a relevant ethical foundation in the context of today's social media. Islam views the honor ('ird) of every individual as something to be preserved, and violations of another person's honor, whether through direct speech or digital means, are considered sinful (munkar). The integration of this value strengthens the santri's understanding that maintaining digital ethics is not only an act of obedience to the law but also part of worship and good character (akhlāq).

The findings of this activity reinforce the research by Harviani et al. (2024), which shows that participatory-based legal education successfully enhances public awareness of the UU ITE and its impact on social life. In that study, active participation was found to be a key factor in improving legal understanding, as it encourages both emotional and cognitive engagement. Similarly, Adnan et al. (2024) assert that legal protection for cyberbullying victims can only be effective if the public has a high level of legal awareness. This means that digital legal education activities like this one are not only informative but also preventive and transformative in shaping legal behaviors in society from an early age.

Furthermore, this activity demonstrates how digital legal education can be integrated into the pesantren education system without compromising its Islamic identity. The santri are not only taught about religious texts and fiqh mu'āmalah (Islamic jurisprudence) in the conventional context but are also introduced to the concept of fiqh al-ijtima'ī al-raqmī or digital social fiqh—an approach that views digital media usage as part of the moral responsibility of Muslims. Through this activity, the santri learned that actions in the digital world should be guided by the principles of *maslahah* (benefit), *amanah* (trust), and *ihsān* (doing good), all of which align with the positive legal norms of Indonesia.

Socially, this legal counseling activity has created a positive multiplier effect within the pesantren environment. Not only did the santri benefit directly, but the ustadz, pesantren administrators, and the surrounding community also began to recognize the importance of digital legal literacy. After the event, several ustadz and pesantren administrators committed to continuing digital legal education in regular activities such as public lectures, halaqah (study circles), and student forums. They argued that understanding digital law is crucial to preventing potential internal conflicts, especially those caused by misunderstandings in communication on social media, such as the spread of false information or comments that hurt others.

As a concrete example of this commitment, the pesantren plans to establish ongoing collaboration with law enforcement and academics, particularly in the fields of law and digital communication.

This collaboration will focus on organizing advanced training on personal data protection, online communication ethics, and cyber law from an Islamic perspective (Islamic cyber law). This initiative is part of a sustainability strategy for community service activities, ensuring that the program does not stop after a single session but evolves into a legal awareness movement that is deeply embedded in the pesantren's culture. Thus, the activity transforms from a mere transfer of knowledge into an effort to shape character and legal values within the Islamic education environment.

Beyond institutional impacts, the results of this activity also indicate a paradigm shift in the digital mindset among the santri. Before the activity, most of the santri viewed social media as a lawless space where they could freely express themselves without considering ethical or legal consequences. However, after the lectures, simulations, and legal discussions, their perspective changed significantly. The santri now view social media not just as a space for entertainment or self-expression, but as a platform for *dakwah* (Islamic outreach) and spreading good values, which must be used with full moral and legal responsibility.

This change is evident in the creative initiatives that emerged after the activity. Some santri have started actively producing positive *dakwah* content on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. They discuss light topics such as the etiquette of digital

communication, the dangers of spreading hoaxes, and the importance of preserving personal dignity online. Interestingly, in each piece of content, the santri now pay attention to communication ethics, copyright, and permission for using digital materials—a direct application of the digital legal literacy they have learned.

This phenomenon proves that digital legal literacy does not limit creativity but rather expands the space for more productive, safe, and ethical expression. The santri have become more aware that law is not just a tool for punishing violations, but also an instrument for shaping a dignified digital civilization. As such, this activity has successfully fostered a generation of santri who are not only spiritually and intellectually capable but also legally literate and digitally empowered, ready to contribute to building a healthy and civilized social media ecosystem.

In conclusion, this digital legal education activity has not only improved the legal knowledge and attitudes of the santri but also strengthened their spiritual and moral character as young Muslims prepared to face the challenges of the digital age. The integration of positive law and Islamic values has proven to be an effective formula for forming comprehensive legal awareness—not only driven by fear of sanctions but also motivated by moral and religious consciousness to act rightly in the digital space.

## CONCLUSION

This community service activity demonstrates that digital legal education is highly effective in raising the santri's legal awareness regarding social media usage and the prevention of cyberbullying. The santri at Darul Falah Islamic Boarding School showed significant improvement in their understanding of the UU ITE (Electronic Information and Transactions Law), digital ethics, and their ability to protect themselves in cyberspace. Additionally, the activity successfully instilled legal values that align with Islamic morality, creating santri who are both digitally literate and ethically grounded. As a follow-up, it is recommended that digital legal education be conducted on an ongoing basis with support from external parties such as law enforcement, legal aid institutions, and communication agencies. The pesantren should also establish clear internal rules for social media usage and form a team of mentors to address cases of digital bullying. In doing so, the pesantren can become a model for value-based educational institutions capable of producing a generation of santri with strong character, ethical conduct, and legal compliance in the digital era..

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