

The Interplay of Digital Literacy and Parenting Styles on Critical Thinking: The Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence in Islamic Education

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Abstract

Understanding how digital competencies and family environments relate to students' emotional and cognitive development can inform Islamic Religious Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam*, PAI). This study examined the relationships of digital literacy and parenting styles with students' emotional intelligence and critical thinking skills, including the mediating role of emotional intelligence. A quantitative design was employed involving 79 students selected from a population of 377 at MAN 1 Mojokerto through proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected using validated and reliable questionnaires and analyzed through path analysis following statistical assumption testing. The findings indicated that digital literacy and authoritative parenting were positively and significantly associated with both emotional intelligence and critical thinking skills. Authoritarian and permissive parenting showed comparatively limited associations with these outcomes. Emotional intelligence also emerged as a significant statistical mediator linking digital literacy and parenting styles to critical thinking. These findings suggest that emotional intelligence provides a relevant link between students' digital and family contexts and their critical thinking in PAI, although the reported relationships do not establish causality. The study contributes an integrated account of these relationships within Islamic religious education and highlights the relevance of digital literacy development, supportive parenting, and emotional learning to educational efforts aimed at strengthening students' critical thinking.

Keywords: Digital Literacy; Parenting Styles; Emotional Intelligence; Critical Thinking; Islamic Religious Education

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in shaping individuals who are capable of living independently, responsibly, and productively. As education evolves, it is no longer solely focused on academic achievement; it also needs to focus on developing students' life skills. These skills are essential for students to adapt to changes, make decisions, solve problems, communicate, collaborate, and effectively face social and economic challenges (Pare & Sihotang, 2023). Therefore, life skills education plays a crucial role in preparing students to acquire skills that can be applied in real life.

The urgency of developing life skills is increasingly apparent amidst rapid social, economic, and technological change. Education that is overly focused on academic achievement and conventional learning has the potential to produce graduates who possess knowledge but are not fully prepared to face the challenges of life and the workplace (Series, 2015). This situation highlights the need for more contextual learning and opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience. Experiential learning enables students not only to acquire knowledge but also to develop their thinking, communication, collaboration, decision-making, and problem-solving skills through real-world experiences (Arvianto et al., 2023).

One approach to developing life skills is through entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship is not only related to economic activity or the ability to produce products, but also serves as a vehicle for character development and a productive mentality. Through entrepreneurial activities, students gain experience in planning activities, developing creativity, solving problems, communicating, working in groups, managing time, and taking responsibility for assigned tasks (Fatah & Zumrotun, 2023). Therefore, entrepreneurial activities are closely related to the development of soft and hard skills, which are an essential part of students' life skills.

This context can be found at the Le Cendekia Nature School (Leadership Cendekia Boarding School) in Gowa Regency, which develops education by combining a nature-based approach, contextual learning, and Islamic character development. This school integrates entrepreneurial activities into the development of students' life skills through various hands-

on activities, including Le Food, Le Shop, ecoprinting, crocheting, and processing local natural materials. These activities provide space for students to actively participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of activities. This learning model provides opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience while developing skills that can be used in everyday life.

In addition to developing technical and economic skills, entrepreneurship at Le Cendekia Nature School also has social, environmental, and spiritual dimensions. The use of local and recycled materials demonstrates a focus on environmental awareness, while interactions between students in group work and communication with instructors provide a platform for developing social skills. As an educational institution based on Islamic values, life skills development at this school also relates to the instillation of honesty, responsibility, trustworthiness, and an Islamic work ethic. Thus, entrepreneurship is not positioned solely as a product-producing activity, but as part of an educational process that integrates skills, character, and values (Doğan & Haser, 2014).

However, the implementation of entrepreneurship programs as a means of developing life skills still faces a number of challenges. Initial observations indicate that program implementation has not been fully integrated as a measurable life skills development strategy. Some activities remain technically oriented and not all are supported by systematic pedagogical planning. Furthermore, limited facilities, training for supervising teachers, and access to external markets present challenges that can impact program optimization. These conditions demonstrate the need for a more in-depth review of program implementation so that entrepreneurship activities do not stop at practical activities but truly contribute to the development of students' life skills.

Several previous studies have shown a significant relationship between the digital environment, family, and affective aspects on students' cognitive development in Islamic Education (PAI) learning. Research by Oktaviani and Setiawati (2025) revealed that digital literacy skills equip students with the ability to sort and validate religious information objectively, which is an important foundation for critical reasoning. Furthermore, findings by Ersila et al. (2025) confirmed that parenting styles—particularly democratic parenting—provide a safe and conducive dialogic space for fostering independent thinking and critical thinking in children at home. Connecting these two factors to the psychological dimension, a study by Bhoki et al. (2025) demonstrated that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role as

a mediating variable; mature emotional regulation and empathy enable students to respond to differing religious views calmly and rationally. This is reinforced by research by Layinah and Fathurohman (2026) in the context of Islamic Education learning, which concluded that strengthening digital literacy and harmonious family parenting patterns will optimize students' emotional intelligence, which in turn significantly encourages an increase in high-level critical thinking skills in solving contemporary moral-religious issues.

The study of life skills development through entrepreneurship is important because a deeper understanding of how this development process occurs in educational practice is still needed. Aspects that need to be considered relate not only to the form of entrepreneurial activity, but also to the development strategy, student involvement, the role of the mentor, factors that support and hinder program implementation, and its impact on life skills development. Furthermore, the characteristics of the Le Cendekia Nature School, which integrates nature-based education, entrepreneurship, and Islamic values, provide a unique context for study.

In the study of digital literacy, parenting, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking skills, students' critical thinking skills in Islamic Education (PAI) learning are integratively influenced by digital literacy, parenting, and emotional intelligence. Digital literacy equips students with the technical, cognitive, and ethical skills to filter and evaluate the flow of religious information responsibly, while parenting—particularly democratic parenting based on emotional warmth—creates a family foundation conducive to children's intellectual and character development (Rahayu, 2026). Amid these interactions, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in self-control, empathy, and wise decision-making when using digital media and responding to environmental dynamics. Various empirical findings confirm that emotional intelligence is not only positively correlated with digital skills and supportive parenting, but also functions as an essential mediator or link that strengthens students' critical thinking dispositions in understanding issues and determining actions that align with Islamic values (Riskiyah et al., 2026).

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the development of student life skills through entrepreneurship at the Le Cendekia Nature School in Gowa Regency, analyze the supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation, and analyze the impact of life skills development through entrepreneurial activities on students. This research is expected to provide an overview of the practice of entrepreneurship-based life skills development in

an educational context that integrates learning experiences, character, independence, and Islamic values.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a causal research type. This approach is used to analyze the causal relationship between digital literacy and parenting patterns as independent variables and critical thinking skills as the dependent variable, with emotional intelligence as the intervening variable. The independent variables in this study consist of digital literacy (X1) and parenting patterns (X2), the intervening variable is emotional intelligence (Z), while the dependent variable is critical thinking skills (Y).

Class XI	Total
Mathematics and Science (MIPA) 1	32
Mathematics and Science (MIPA) 2	33
Mathematics and Science (MIPA) 3	34
Mathematics and Science (MIPA) 4	33
Mathematics and Science (MIPA) 5	35
Mathematics and Science (MIPA) 6	31
Social Sciences (IPS) 1	35
Social Sciences (IPS) 2	34
Social Sciences (IPS) 3	34
Religious Affairs	29
MAPK	23
Language	24
Total Students	377

The population of the study was all 377 students of class XI MAN 1 Mojokerto. The population consisted of 32 students of MIPA 1, 33 students of MIPA 2, 34 students of MIPA 3, 33 students of MIPA 4, 35 students of MIPA 5, 31 students of MIPA 6, 35 students of IPS 1, 34 students of IPS 2, 34 students of IPS 3, 29 students of Religious Studies, 23 students of MAPK, and 24 students of Language. The determination of the number of samples used the Slovin formula with an error rate of 10%, resulting in 79,035 students rounded up to 79 students. Because the population consists of several classes, sampling was carried out using the Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling technique. Based on the proportion of the number of students in each class, the sample obtained consisted of 7 students from MIPA

1, 7 students from MIPA 2, 7 students from MIPA 3, 7 students from MIPA 4, 7 students from MIPA 5, 7 students from MIPA 6, 7 students from IPS 1, 7 students from IPS 2, 7 students from IPS 3, 6 students from Religious Studies, 5 students from MAPK, and 5 students from Language, with a total of 79 students.

The sample in this study was determined using the Slovin formula (Rifkan, 2023), namely:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Information:

n : Number of samples

N : Population size

e : Error rate

The sample obtained was 79,035 rounded to 79 based on calculations with an error rate of 0.1, namely:

$$n = \frac{377}{(1+377(0,1)^2)} = 79,035$$

This is because the population consists of several classes, so samples for each class are taken using the Proportionated Stratified Random Sampling technique with the formula (Machali, 2018; Sugiyono, 2019; Waruwu, 2023):

$$ni = \frac{Ni}{N} \times n$$

Information:

ni : Number of samples by strata

Ni : Population size by strata

N : Total population

n : Total number of samples

Based on the formula above, each class obtained the following samples:

Class XI	Number of Samples
MIPA 1	7
MIPA 2	7
MIPA 3	7
MIPA 4	7
MIPA 5	7
MIPA 6	7
IPS 1	7

Class XI	Number of Samples
IPS 2	7
IPS 3	7
Religious Affairs	6
MAPK	5
Language	5
Total Sample	79

Research data was collected using a questionnaire administered directly to students. The instrument used a Likert scale with five response alternatives: always (5), often (4), sometimes (3), rarely (2), and never (1). The digital literacy instrument consisted of 12 items covering operational skills, information processing skills, collaboration skills, and awareness skills. The parenting style instrument measured authoritarian, pessimistic, and democratic parenting styles in fathers and mothers. The emotional intelligence instrument consisted of 10 items covering self-awareness, self-regulation, drive to act, empathy, and social skills. Meanwhile, critical thinking skills were measured through 10 items covering the ability to provide simple explanations, develop basic knowledge, draw conclusions, provide further explanations, and use techniques and strategies.

Before being used in data collection, the research instruments were tested for validity and reliability. Validity testing was conducted by correlating the scores of each item with the total score using SPSS. An instrument item was declared valid if the calculated r value was greater than the table r value at a significance level of 5%. The test results showed that all instrument items had a calculated r value greater than the table r of 0.184, thus all items were declared valid. Reliability testing was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The test results showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.794 for digital literacy; 0.692 for fathers' authoritarian parenting; 0.726 for mothers' authoritarian parenting; 0.698 for fathers' pessimistic parenting; 0.880 for mothers' pessimistic parenting; 0.800 for fathers' democratic parenting; 0.780 for mothers' democratic parenting; 0.726 for emotional intelligence; and 0.779 for critical thinking skills. These values indicate that the research instrument has sufficient reliability for use in data collection.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 27. The analysis began with descriptive statistics to describe the characteristics of the research data. Next, assumption tests were conducted, including normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality, the Deviation from Linearity test for linearity,

the Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for multicollinearity, and the Glejser test for heteroscedasticity. The test results showed that the data met the analysis requirements: normally distributed, linearly related, free of multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity.

Hypothesis testing was conducted using t-tests and F-tests to determine partial and simultaneous effects. The coefficient of determination was used to determine the contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable. Next, path analysis was used to examine the effect of digital literacy and parenting styles on critical thinking skills through emotional intelligence as an intervening variable. Path analysis allows for the examination of direct and indirect influences between variables, thus revealing the role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between digital literacy and parenting styles and students' critical thinking skills.

RESULTS

This study involved 79 eleventh-grade students at MAN 1 Mojokerto as respondents. Data were obtained through a questionnaire measuring digital literacy, parenting styles, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking skills. Descriptive results indicate that respondents generally have a positive tendency in the aspects of digital literacy, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking skills. In the digital literacy variable, for example, 37 of the 79 students always protect personal information when using digital platforms, while 29 students always consider the value and usefulness of information before sharing it. In the emotional intelligence variable, 52 students often learn from experience and mistakes and 41 students often take responsibility for their actions and decisions. Meanwhile, in critical thinking skills, 44 students often consider various sources before reaching conclusions and 42 students often understand and adapt to differences in others' perspectives.

The Influence of Digital Literacy and Parenting Styles on Emotional Intelligence

The results of multiple linear regression analysis show that digital literacy and parenting styles simultaneously have a strong relationship with emotional intelligence. The correlation value (R) of 0.867 with an R Square value of 0.752 indicates that digital literacy and parenting dimensions contribute 75.2% to students' emotional intelligence, while 24.8% is influenced by other factors outside the research model. The F test results obtained a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ so that simultaneously the variables of digital literacy and

parenting styles have a significant effect on emotional intelligence.

Partially, digital literacy has a positive and significant effect on emotional intelligence with a regression coefficient of 0.277 and a significance value of 0.000. Fathers' authoritarian parenting also shows a positive and significant effect with a coefficient of 0.259 and a significance value of 0.005. In contrast, mothers' authoritarian parenting, fathers' pessimistic parenting, and mothers' pessimistic parenting do not show a significant effect on emotional intelligence, with significance values of 0.506; 0.172; and 0.890, respectively. Fathers' and mothers' democratic parenting show a positive and significant effect with coefficients of 0.101 and 0.246, respectively, and significance values of 0.049 and 0.000.

These findings indicate that students' ability to use and manage digital information is related to their emotional development. Digital literacy is not only related to technical skills in using devices, but also to the ability to filter information, consider the impact of media use, and build responsible interactions (Huda & Hashim, 2022). These conditions can help students develop self-control, self-awareness, empathy, and social skills. These results also demonstrate the importance of parenting styles that provide space for children to develop independently and be involved in decision-making. Democratic parenting styles demonstrated by both fathers and mothers have a positive influence on emotional intelligence.

The Influence of Digital Literacy and Parenting Styles on Critical Thinking Skills

The results of the regression analysis indicate that digital literacy and parenting styles simultaneously influence critical thinking skills. The R value of 0.937 and R Square of 0.878 indicate that digital literacy and all dimensions of parenting styles contribute 87.8% to students' critical thinking skills, while other factors contribute the remaining 12.2%. The F-test yielded a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, concluding that these variables collectively have a significant influence on critical thinking skills.

Partially, digital literacy has a regression coefficient of 0.182 with a significance level of 0.001, indicating a positive and significant effect on critical thinking skills. The father's authoritarian parenting style also has a positive and significant effect, with a coefficient of 0.170 and a significance level of 0.007. The mother's authoritarian parenting style has no significant effect, with a significance level of 0.827. Fathers' pessimistic parenting styles had a positive and significant effect, with a coefficient of 0.115 and a significance level of 0.015,

while mothers' pessimistic parenting styles had no significant effect, with a value of 0.479. Both fathers' and mothers' democratic parenting styles had positive and significant effects, with coefficients of 0.186 and 0.380, respectively, and a significance level of 0.001.

These results indicate that students' ability to use technology and process digital information can support critical thinking. Students who are able to search for, consider, and evaluate digital information have a greater opportunity to develop their ability to analyze information and make decisions. Descriptive findings also show that most students are accustomed to considering multiple sources before drawing conclusions and choosing appropriate actions to solve problems.

In terms of parenting styles, the differing influences between fathers and mothers indicate that a child's interaction experiences with each parent do not always have the same effect on critical thinking skills. Democratic parenting styles of both fathers and mothers have a positive influence, primarily because they provide opportunities for children to make decisions, express opinions, and develop independence. These results align with research by Huang et al. (2025), which shows that warmth and emotional understanding in parenting play a positive role in critical thinking dispositions, while rejection and punishment tend to have a negative influence.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Critical Thinking Skills

The statistical analysis results show that emotional intelligence plays a very strong determinant role in students' critical thinking skills. A correlation value of 0.926 indicates a very strong association between the two variables. Simultaneously, a determination value of 0.857 demonstrates that emotional intelligence explains 85.7% of the variance in critical thinking skills, while the remaining 14.3% is influenced by external factors outside the regression model. The direction of this influence is proven positive, shown by a regression coefficient of 0.911, indicating that any increase in emotional intelligence is directly proportional to an increase in critical thinking skills. The significance of this influence is confirmed by the t-test probability value of 0.000, which is well below the threshold of 0.05.

Conceptually, this substantial contribution confirms that the critical thinking process is not a cognitive activity free from affective dynamics. The ability to evaluate arguments, identify biases, and draw rational conclusions requires stable emotional regulation to prevent

individuals from becoming trapped in subjective reasoning or impulsive impulses (Schiebener & Brand, 2015). Students who are accustomed to recognizing their own emotions are more likely to be open to opposing perspectives, listen actively, and take full responsibility for their decisions. This emotional maturity acts as a psychological foundation that allows logical reasoning to function optimally without being distorted by anxiety, reluctance to accept criticism, or fanaticism about personal perspectives (Anggara, 2025).

These empirical findings also strengthen the scientific consensus established by various previous studies regarding the positive relationship between these two psychological constructs. As stated in the study by Christodoulakis et al. (2023), emotional intelligence not only acts as a direct predictor but also functions as an intermediary mechanism that integrates stimulation from the learning environment into students' analytical capacity. Academic environments that demand complex problem-solving can only be effectively addressed if students possess adequate mental resilience and emotional intelligence. Therefore, strengthening students' emotional dimensions is a strategic instrument integral to the agenda of developing reasoning and critical thinking competencies in educational settings.

The Influence of Digital Literacy and Parenting Styles on Critical Thinking Skills through Emotional Intelligence

Path analysis was used to determine the influence of digital literacy and parenting styles on critical thinking skills through emotional intelligence. The first-stage regression results indicated that digital literacy and parenting style dimensions influenced emotional intelligence, while the second-stage regression included digital literacy, parenting styles, and emotional intelligence as predictors of critical thinking skills.

The second model obtained an R value of 0.995 and an R Square of 0.989. This means that digital literacy, parenting styles, and emotional intelligence collectively contributed 98.9% to critical thinking skills, with the remaining 1.1% being influenced by other factors. The F-test yielded a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that all variables in the model simultaneously had a significant effect on critical thinking skills.

Standardized coefficients indicated that emotional intelligence had a coefficient of 0.671 on critical thinking skills. Meanwhile, the coefficient for the direct effect of digital literacy on critical thinking skills was -0.002. In the parenting pattern dimension, the direct coefficients are -0.001 for the father's authoritarian parenting pattern, 0.030 for the mother's

authoritarian parenting pattern, 0.207 for the father's pessimistic parenting pattern, -0.032 for the mother's pessimistic parenting pattern, 0.198 for the father's democratic parenting pattern, and 0.257 for the mother's democratic parenting pattern.

The indirect effect is obtained by multiplying the path coefficient from the independent variable to emotional intelligence by the path coefficient from emotional intelligence to critical thinking skills. The results show that the indirect effect of digital literacy through emotional intelligence is 0.315, greater than the direct effect of -0.002. The indirect effect of father's authoritarian parenting is 0.202, greater than the direct effect of -0.001. For mother's authoritarian parenting, the indirect effect is -0.046, smaller than the direct effect of 0.030. Father's pessimistic parenting has an indirect effect of -0.071, smaller than the direct effect of 0.207. Mother's pessimistic parenting has an indirect effect of -0.007, which is greater than the direct effect of -0.032. Meanwhile, father's and mother's democratic parenting have indirect effects of 0.111 and 0.191, respectively, which are smaller than the direct effects of 0.198 and 0.257, respectively.

These findings indicate that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in the relationship between digital literacy, parenting styles, and critical thinking skills. The influence of digital literacy on critical thinking skills is greater when emotional intelligence is positioned as an intermediary variable. This suggests that the ability to access and process digital information does not fully determine critical thinking skills without the ability to manage emotions (Nurhasanah et al., 2025). Students need to have the ability to control themselves, consider others' perspectives, and make decisions calmly so that information obtained through digital media can be processed into critical considerations.

These findings also show that the influence of parental parenting styles on critical thinking skills is not always direct. In some dimensions, emotional intelligence strengthens the influence, while in others, the direct influence outweighs the indirect influence. This situation indicates that the development of students' critical thinking skills is a complex process and is not determined by a single factor. The family environment can provide the foundation for emotional development, while experience using technology provides a space for students to develop information processing skills (Ichsan, 2019, 2023; Ichsan et al., 2023; Ichsan & Samsudin, 2019; Pranajati & Ichsan, 2025; Satriyawan & Ichsan, 2020; Umami & Ichsan, 2024). Both aspects can then contribute to critical thinking skills through the development of emotional intelligence.

Overall, the research results indicate that emotional intelligence is a variable that has a strong contribution to critical thinking skills. This is evident from the path coefficient value of 0.671 in the model involving all variables. This finding reinforces the view that developing critical thinking skills in Islamic Education (PAI) learning requires attention to both the cognitive and emotional dimensions. PAI learning is not sufficient simply to provide religious information and materials; it also needs to create learning experiences that encourage students to manage their emotions, consider multiple perspectives, evaluate information, and make decisions based on reasons and values consistent with Islamic teachings.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that integrated digital literacy and parenting play a crucial role in shaping students' emotional intelligence and critical thinking skills in Islamic Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI*) learning. Simultaneously, digital skills and family parenting dynamics are proven to contribute significantly to students' emotional maturity and critical thinking skills, with a firm father figure and democratic parenting styles from both parents being the strongest determinants, while emotional intelligence itself is confirmed to act as a very substantial direct predictor of critical thinking capacity. Furthermore, path analysis shows that emotional intelligence functions effectively as a mediating variable that strengthens the transmission of the influence of digital literacy, authority-oriented paternal leadership, and challenging maternal parenting styles on improving students' critical thinking skills. These findings conclude that the development of critical reasoning in PAI learning does not solely depend on mastery of information technology and family parenting in a linear manner, but rather requires stabilization of emotional maturity as an essential psychological bridge in navigating higher-order thinking processes in the madrasah environment.

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