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Family-Based Informal Education Management for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency in the Digital Age: An Interdisciplinary Study of Education, Sociology, and Law

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aims to analyze the role of informal family education management in preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age through an interdisciplinary approach combining education, sociology, and law, particularly with regard to family supervision, social control, and adolescents' digital activities

Methodology: This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach using field research and a case study design. Data collection was conducted through moderate participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Data analysis utilized the Miles and Huberman interactive model through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data validity was tested using source triangulation, method triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing

Digital Era
Social Control

Main Findings: Research findings indicate that family-based informal education management through planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring plays a crucial role in preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age. Monitoring digital activities, family communication, limiting social media use, and the internalization of moral values have been shown to strengthen social control over adolescents. Conversely, low parental digital literacy, weak online supervision, and peer influence increase the risk of gang fights, bullying, street racing, and other deviant behaviors

Novelty/Originality of this study: The novelty of this study lies in its examination of family-based informal education management as a preventive strategy against juvenile delinquency, analyzed from an interdisciplinary perspective through the lenses of education, sociology, and law in the context of the digital age. This study also identifies family digital supervision and parental digital literacy as key components in strengthening social control over adolescents.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency has become increasingly complex and multifaceted. Various forms of deviant behavior such as student brawls, bullying, violence among students, misuse of digital media, illegal street racing, and involvement in criminal activities are indicative of a lack of social supervision and character development among adolescents [1]. The growth of the digital world has also exacerbated these challenges, as adolescents are influenced not only by their immediate social environment but also by digital social interactions, which tend to be difficult for families and schools to monitor effectively [2], [3]. This situation indicates that the issue of juvenile delinquency is no longer viewed solely as an individual problem, but rather as a social and educational issue that involves the broader environment in the context of shaping adolescents' character.

This phenomenon is evident in numerous cases of juvenile delinquency that occurred in Rejang Lebong Regency between 2023 and 2026. In 2023, a brawl broke out between students from Rejang Lebong 1 State Senior High School and Rejang Lebong 1 State Vocational High School in the Sukowati Curup area, which reportedly involved the use of sharp weapons [4]. The case was resolved through guidance and coordination with the school without formal criminal proceedings. In 2025, violence escalated with a case of assault against a student identified only by the initials RA in East Curup, which left the victim permanently paralyzed [5]. Unlike the previous case, this case was prosecuted through the legal system until the perpetrator was sentenced to a criminal penalty under the juvenile justice system. In fact, by 2026, violent behavior began to occur at an earlier age through cases of bullying involving groups of elementary school students that occurred repeatedly within the school environment [6]. These various cases indicate that juvenile delinquency is on the rise in terms of both its intensity and the nature of the behavior, as well as its social and legal consequences.

Similar incidents have also occurred in various regions across Indonesia. The death of Vina in Cirebon in 2016, the death of Afif Maulana in Padang in 2024, and the discovery of seven teenagers' bodies in the Bekasi River that same year highlight the high level of adolescent involvement in risky behavior and group violence [7], [8], [9]. These various incidents demonstrate that adolescents find themselves in a vulnerable social situation due to weak social control, peer influence, and a lack of consistent supervision from the family environment. From a sociological perspective, these conditions indicate a weakening of the family's primary social control function, which should serve as the primary setting for shaping children's character and behavior [10], [11].

The education of children is, in essence, the primary responsibility of the family, which is grounded in strong religious and legal principles. Legally, Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System stipulates that education is delivered through formal, non-formal, and informal channels that complement one another within a single national education system [12]. In this context, informal family education positions parents as the primary educators in character development, the internalization of moral values, and the supervision of adolescent behavior, particularly during adolescence a phase marked by biological, psychological, and social changes that make adolescents vulnerable to environmental influences [13]. However, the rise of the digital age has made the

role of informal family education increasingly challenging, as adolescents' social interactions now take place not only in physical settings but also through social media and virtual spaces that are difficult to control directly [14]. Weak supervision, minimal parental involvement, and limited oversight of adolescents' social and digital activities can potentially lead to a loss of control, making adolescents more susceptible to the influence of negative peer groups and social circles [15]. Therefore, informal family education requires adaptive management through ongoing planning, guidance, support, and behavior management for adolescents in order to foster moral and social resilience in the digital age .

Preventing juvenile delinquency cannot rely solely on legal measures taken after an offense has been committed; rather, it requires strengthening informal family education as the primary form of social control [16], [17]. In this context, educational management is a management process that encompasses the functions of planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling in order to effectively achieve educational goals [18], [19]. Within the family environment, these functions include moral guidance, habit formation, behavioral supervision, and social and digital mentoring for adolescents. Informal family education plays a strategic role in shaping children's character and guiding their behavior from an early age, especially in the digital age when adolescents are influenced not only by their physical environment but also by social media and virtual interactions that are difficult for parents to monitor directly [20], [21].

During adolescence, teenagers go through a period of biological, psychological, and social transition during which they are particularly susceptible to environmental influences. From a sociological perspective, juvenile delinquency arises from weak social control, peer influence, and a failure to internalize values within the family [22], [23]. Peer influence and digital interactions have been shown to contribute to an increase in deviant behavior among adolescents [15], [24]. In addition, weak parental supervision and low family involvement also contribute to an increased risk of juvenile delinquency [25], [26]. Therefore, preventing juvenile delinquency requires an interdisciplinary approach through the continuous strengthening of informal family education management.

Previous studies have shown that families play a crucial role in character development and the prevention of juvenile delinquency. Hanifah and Khairunnisa (2023) emphasize that the character development of the younger generation is not solely the responsibility of formal education, but also of informal education within the family and the community [27]. Meanwhile, Anugrah et al. (2023) explain that parents serve as guides, facilitators, motivators, and educators in supporting adolescents' development to help them avoid deviant behavior [25]. Research by Suherman et al. (2025) also shows that education serves as a tool for social intervention in addressing juvenile delinquency through collaboration between families, schools, and the social environmentl [28]. In addition, Turan and Rahman (2024) found that parental monitoring and moral identity have a significant effect on reducing rates of juvenile delinquency [26], Meanwhile, Wallace (2020) asserts that parenting styles involving supervision, emotional closeness, and consistent rules contribute to lower rates of deviant behavior among adolescents [29]. These studies show that families play a strategic role in shaping adolescents' behavior and social control.

On the other hand, several international studies have also highlighted the importance of a multidimensional approach to the prevention of juvenile delinquency. Aazami et al. (2023), through a systematic review, identified family dysfunction and family conflict as major risk factors for juvenile delinquency, while positive parent-child relationships and family-based interventions have been shown to be effective as protective factors [30]. Mellgren et al. (2026) also demonstrate that family- and community-based psychosocial interventions can prevent adolescents from engaging in criminal and gang-related behavior [31]. Nevertheless, most previous studies have focused on psychological approaches, character education, or social interventions in general and have not specifically examined informal family education management as a preventive strategy systematically implemented through the functions of planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising education within the family. Furthermore, studies on juvenile delinquency are generally still conducted in a fragmented manner and have not yet integrated educational, sociological, and legal perspectives into a single interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, this study offers a novel perspective by positioning family-based informal education management as a strategic instrument in preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age through an interdisciplinary approach combining education, sociology, and law.

Given these circumstances, this study is important to analyze how family-based informal education management plays a role in preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age through an interdisciplinary examination of education, sociology, and law. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of research on family-based informal education, while also offering practical implications for strengthening character education, family resilience, and family-based strategies for preventing juvenile delinquency. Furthermore, the findings of this study are expected to serve as a basis for developing family guidance and youth education policies that are more adaptable to the social challenges of the digital age.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach using field research and a case study design. This approach is used to gain an in-depth understanding of family management practices and informal education in the prevention of juvenile delinquency in the digital age within the social and legal context of Rejang Lebong Regency. [32]. The research location was selected based on the high incidence of juvenile delinquency between 2023 and 2025, such as student fights, illegal street racing, bullying, and other deviant behaviors. The research focuses on the family environment, junior high and high schools, and the social environments where adolescents interact.

The research subjects were families with teenage children, while the research informants included parents, teenagers, guidance counselors or homeroom teachers, community leaders, and officers from the Rejang Lebong District Police. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria: 1) parents with children aged 12–18 years, 2) adolescents who have been involved in or are at risk of being involved in juvenile delinquency, and 3) individuals who understand the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency. Snowball sampling was used to expand the network of informants until data saturation was achieved.

The research data consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through moderate participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentationi [33], [34]. Observations were conducted on family supervision patterns, parent-adolescent interactions, and monitoring of children's social and digital activities. Interviews focused on families' informal educational management practices, including the planning, organization, implementation, and supervision of education within the family. Meanwhile, documentation was obtained from case reports, school policies, mass media coverage, and social media content related to juvenile delinquency.

Data analysis using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which involves data reduction, data presentation, and the ongoing drawing of conclusions [35]. The analysis was conducted using an interdisciplinary approach that integrates perspectives from education, sociology, and law to understand the relationship between family-based informal education and the prevention of juvenile delinquency in the digital age. Data reliability was tested through source triangulation, methodological triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing to ensure the validity and consistency of the research findings

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study's findings indicate that informal family management plays a crucial role in preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age. Most families implement moral guidance, family communication, religious practices, and supervision of adolescent behavior through non-formal education. However, this management is not yet carried out systematically in terms of planning, implementation, and supervision of family education. Parents tend to adopt a spontaneous or reactive parenting style when adolescents begin to exhibit deviant behavior. The study found that technological advancements pose a major challenge in monitoring adolescents. Most parents admit to facing difficulties in controlling adolescents' use of social media, virtual communication, online gaming, and online activities. Family supervision is primarily focused on physical activities, while digital activities proceed without optimal control. This situation leads to an increased influence of peer groups and virtual environments on adolescent behavior.

Table 1. Key Findings of the Study

Aspect of Findings	Type of Findings	Impact on Adolescents
Family Education Planning	Establishment of rules regarding social media use and curfew	Reducing the risk of promiscuity
Family organization	The division of roles between fathers and mothers in supervision	More consistent supervision of teenagers
Implementation of informal education	Regular worship, routine communication, digital support	Improving self-control in adolescents
Supervision and control	Monitoring online activities and social circles	Curbing deviant behavior
Barriers	Parents' busy schedules and low digital literacy	Parental supervision is not very effective

The forms of juvenile delinquency identified include fights between students, illegal street racing, violations of school rules, alcohol consumption, and the incitement of conflict through social media. In some cases, social media is used as a means of communication and group mobilization prior to acts of delinquency occurring in the social environment. This indicates that the digital space has become an important factor in the development of deviant behavior among adolescents [36], [37], [38]. The study's findings also indicate that families who practice open communication, monitor social media, limit gadget use, and supervise their teens' digital activities tend to have stronger social control over their children's behavior. Conversely, weak parental involvement, low family digital literacy, and a lack of online supervision increase teens' vulnerability to delinquent behavior [39], [40], [41].

From an educational perspective, juvenile delinquency can be triggered by a lack of internalization of values and character education within the family [42]. From a sociological perspective, deviant behavior is influenced by weak family social control and the strong influence of peer groups in the digital space [43]. Meanwhile, from a legal perspective, the study found that some parents do not yet fully understand their responsibility to supervise their children, particularly with regard to adolescents' digital activities. Therefore, preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age requires strengthening informal family education through digital supervision, family communication, social control, and the continuous improvement of parents' digital literacy.

3.1. Family-Based Informal Education Management and the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency

This study shows that informal family educational management practices have a significant influence on shaping adolescent behavior and preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age. The most dominant dimension was found in the aspects of monitoring and controlling adolescent behavior, particularly in monitoring the use of digital/social media, social circles, and daily digital activities [44], [45]. These findings show that families who consistently monitor their children tend to have teenagers with better self-control and social discipline [46]. The findings of this study are consistent with the research by Turan and Rahman (2024), which confirms that parental monitoring has a significant effect on reducing the incidence of juvenile delinquency [26]. In addition, Wallace (2020) also explains that parenting styles that involve supervision, emotional closeness, and consistent rules contribute to lower rates of deviant behavior among adolescents [29]. In the context of this study, parental supervision is not only understood as control over physical behavior, but also encompasses monitoring of adolescents' digital activities, which are becoming increasingly complex in the age of information technology.

Research findings show that families with open communication and a clear division of parenting roles are better able to manage adolescent behavior than families with permissive or less structured parenting styles. This suggests that the family's informal educational management functions which include planning, organizing, executing, and controlling, as per Fayol's concept are key elements in the formation of family social control. [47], [48], [49].

However, this study also found that most parents still struggle with monitoring their children's digital activities. Many parents lack sufficient digital literacy, so their monitoring of teenagers' social media, virtual communication, and online activities is not yet optimal [50]. This situation indicates that digital transformation has shifted family education patterns from conventional supervision toward technology-based supervision, which requires parents to be adaptable. Critically, this study demonstrates that adolescent delinquency in the digital age can no longer be understood merely as a form of individual moral failure, but also as a consequence of the weakness of the family's informal educational management system in addressing social and technological changes. Consequently, family-based informal education in the digital age requires a parenting approach that is more adaptive, participatory, and grounded in digital literacy.

3.2. The Influence of the Social Environment and Digital Media on Adolescent Behavior

This study found that digital media and peer groups are major factors influencing adolescent behavior. Heavy use of social media makes adolescents more susceptible to aggressive behavior, violent content, consumerist culture, and other deviant behaviors. In addition, the digital space extends the influence of peer groups beyond the constraints of time and place, making it increasingly difficult for families to exercise control [51], [52]. Temuan ini sejalan dengan teori kontrol sosial Hirschi yang menjelaskan bahwa lemahnya keterikatan sosial keluarga dapat meningkatkan kecenderungan perilaku menyimpang pada remaja [2]. Penelitian Laursen dan Veenstra (2021) also shows that peer influence plays a significant role in shaping adolescent behavior [15]. In the digital age, this influence has grown even stronger because social interactions take place not only in person but also through social media and virtual communities.

In addition, the findings of McCuddy, Gallupe, and Kranenbarg (2024) indicate that online social interactions also increase the risk of delinquent behavior among adolescents [24]. This finding aligns with real-world observations indicating that some adolescents derive their social identity and group recognition more from

digital media than from their family environment. Consequently, the family's educational authority is shifting as the digital space emerges as a new source for shaping adolescents' values and behaviors.

Critically, this study shows that digital media is not solely the cause of juvenile delinquency, but acts as an accelerating factor when family control mechanisms weaken. Families that lack effective communication patterns and proper digital supervision tend to be more vulnerable to losing control over their children's behavioral development [53], [54], [55], [56]. Therefore, preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age cannot be achieved simply by restricting the use of technology; rather, it requires strengthening family communication, improving parents' digital literacy, and maintaining ongoing social supervision.

3.3. Interdisciplinary Analysis of Education, Sociology, and Law

From an educational perspective, this study shows that informal family education plays a crucial role in the internalization of moral values, character development, and the strengthening of self-control in adolescents. Families that practice positive reinforcement, educational communication, and setting a good example tend to have adolescents with better social behavior [57]. This finding aligns with Lickona's view that character education must begin in the family environment as the primary foundation for a child's moral development [21]. From a sociological perspective, juvenile delinquency is understood as a result of weak family social control and changes in the social structure of modern society [46], [56], [58]. Research findings indicate that low parental involvement, weak environmental supervision, and strong peer influence are the primary factors that increase the risk of deviant behavior among adolescents. These conditions demonstrate that juvenile delinquency is a multidimensional social phenomenon that cannot be separated from changes in social interaction patterns in the digital age.

Table 2. Risk Factors and Prevention Strategies for Juvenile Delinquency

Risk Factors	Forms of Misconduct	Family Prevention Strategies
Peer influence	street fights and illegal street racing	Monitoring of social interactions
Unregulated social media	Negative and violent content	Digital guidance
Poor family communication	Aggressive behavior	Intensive dialogue and communication
Lack of parental supervision	Violation of norms	Enforcement of family rules

Meanwhile, from a legal perspective, this study found that the responsibility for children's education is normatively regulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System and Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection. However, in practice, the implementation of the family's responsibility for informal education still faces various obstacles, particularly regarding the lack of control over adolescents' digital behavior [59]. The interdisciplinary analysis in this study shows that an educational approach without social control will be less effective, whereas a legal approach without family support is merely repressive [60]. Therefore, preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age requires the integration of family education, the strengthening of social control within the community, and legal regulations that adapt to developments in digital technology.

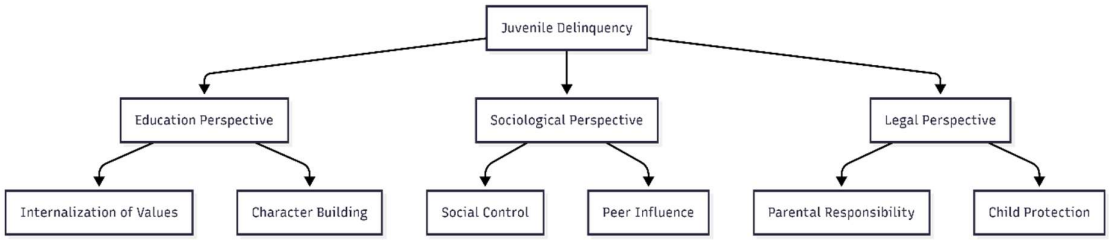


Figure. 1. Framework of Juvenile Delinquency Prevention in the Digital Era

Theoretically, this study expands the field of family education management by incorporating the dimension of digital transformation as a key factor in the effectiveness of informal family education. This study

also reinforces theories of social control and character education by demonstrating that family supervision based on communication and digital literacy has a significant influence on adolescent behavior [61], [62]. The novelty of this study lies in its integration of educational, sociological, and legal perspectives in analyzing family-based informal education management in the digital age. This study not only positions the family as an institution of moral education but also as a system of social control that must be able to adapt to technological advancements and changes in adolescents' social interaction patterns .

In practical terms, this study highlights the need to strengthen digital-based family literacy programs, provide digital training for parents, and enhance collaboration among families, schools, and the community in monitoring adolescents' development. In addition, local governments and educational institutions need to develop digital education programs that focus not only on the use of technology but also on strengthening digital ethics and social control among adolescents [63], [64]. This study also has several limitations. First, this study employs a qualitative approach within a specific geographical scope, so the findings cannot yet be broadly generalized. Second, the study has not quantitatively measured the extent of the influence of each function of informal educational management on juvenile delinquency. Third, the rapid pace of digital technology development allows for the emergence of new forms of delinquency that have not been fully identified in this study.
Therefore, future research is recommended to employ a mixed-methods or longitudinal approach to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of family-based informal education and juvenile delinquency in the digital age. In addition, future research should also explore the role of family digital literacy, social media monitoring, and technology-based child protection policies as part of strategies to prevent juvenile delinquency

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and interdisciplinary analysis conducted, this study concludes that family-based informal education management which encompasses planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring plays a significant role in preventing juvenile delinquency in the digital age. Parental supervision, family communication, the internalization of values, and guidance on the use of digital media have been shown to be important factors in shaping social control and adolescent behavior. These findings reinforce the view that the prevention of juvenile delinquency is not solely the responsibility of formal educational institutions but also requires the strengthening of family-based informal education that is adaptive to technological advancements and social media. Theoretically, this study supports an interdisciplinary approach involving education, sociology, and law in understanding juvenile delinquency as a multidimensional phenomenon. The novelty of this research lies in the examination of family informal education management as a structured preventive strategy within the context of the digital age. For future research, it is recommended to conduct a longitudinal study to test the long-term effectiveness of family informal education and to explore the roles of digital parenting, parental digital literacy, and the influence of social media as variables that either strengthen or weaken the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

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INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

If your research uses humans or animals, please include informed consent statement in your writing. For example: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study. Prior to participation, each subject was provided with a detailed explanation of the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. All participants voluntarily agreed to participate and signed a written informed consent form.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Authors must identify and declare any personal circumstances or interest that may be perceived as influencing the representation or interpretation of reported research results. If there is no conflict of interest, please

state "The authors declare no conflict of interest." Any role of the funding sponsors in the choice of research project; design of the study; in the collection, analyses or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results must be declared in this section.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used in the preparation, analysis, or writing of this manuscript. All aspects of the research, including data collection, interpretation, and manuscript preparation, were carried out entirely by the authors without the assistance of AI-based technologies.

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