
Cybercrime in Islamic Perspective: The Role of Islamic Education & Criminal Law in Combating Online Sexual Crimes

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Abstrak

This study aims to examine the phenomenon of cybercrime, especially online sexual crimes (cybersex), from an Islamic perspective and the role of Islamic education and criminal law in overcoming it. Online sexual crimes are increasingly growing along with the rapid progress of information and communication technology, which raises new challenges in the fields of law and morality. In this context, Islamic education and the criminal law system have an important role in preventing and eradicating such acts. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive analytical approach, collecting data from Islamic law sources and criminal law studies related to cybercrime at SMP Islam Plered Cirebon. The results of the study indicate that Islamic education can provide a strong moral foundation in preventing the misuse of technology, while Islamic and state criminal law offer strict sanctions for perpetrators of cybersex. The implementation of both in society is expected to create better awareness and self-control among individuals. The social implications of this study show the importance of integration between religious education and law in building a society that is aware of the negative impacts of technology. The role of families, educational institutions, and the government in providing education about the dangers of cybersex as well as strict law enforcement is needed to create a safe and responsible cyberspace. The results of this study have implications for the need to strengthen Islamic education and curriculum on digital ethics, reform the legal system, develop comprehensive prevention programs involving the role of parents, and increase digital legal literacy in society to deal with cybersex problems effectively.

Keywords: *Cybercrime; Islamic Education; Criminal Law; Online Sexual Crimes; Prevention*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology in the last few decades has changed almost all aspects of human life, including in terms of social behavior and morality. One of the negative impacts of this technological progress is the emergence of the phenomenon of cybercrime, including online sexual crimes or cybersex. Cybersex refers to sexual behavior that occurs through digital media, either directly or in the form of indecent images or videos, which often involve children and adolescents. This crime is becoming increasingly rampant, along with the increasing use of the internet and digital devices among the public.

Within the framework of social theory, the development of digital technology has introduced new forms of crime that require new approaches to prevention. Symbolic interaction theory, for example, suggests that cyberspace as a new social space forms norms that are different from social norms in the real world (Goffman, 2023). Although cyberspace provides freedom, this freedom is often misused to carry out actions that are not in accordance with applicable moral and legal norms. In this context, criminological theories regarding cybercrime and misuse of technology are very relevant to studying the phenomenon of cybersex. Modern criminal law has begun to adapt to this phenomenon through various laws regulating cybercrime, but its implementation still requires broader awareness and education (Hawdon, 2021; Tatarinova et al., 2016; Chang, 2019).

In the Islamic perspective, any form of behavior that violates religious norms, including in cyberspace, is considered a violation of God's law. Islam teaches the importance of maintaining individual honor and morality, which is reflected in the prohibition of adultery, backbiting, and all forms of sexual abuse (Al-Qur'an, Surah An-Nur: 30-31). In the context of cybersex, Islam emphasizes the importance of avoiding behavior that damages the dignity of oneself and others, and maintaining relationships with others with good ethics and morals. Islamic education, both formal and informal, plays an important role in shaping the character of individuals who are responsible in using technology.

In Indonesia, the phenomenon of cybersex has become a serious problem, given the high use of the internet and the penetration of digital technology in various levels of society. Data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in 2023 showed that around 77% of Indonesia's population was connected to the internet. Although the internet has a positive impact, negative phenomena such as digital pornography, including cybersex, are increasingly found among young people. Cases of online sexual crimes involving children and adolescents are increasing, and this shows a major challenge in terms of legal protection for the younger generation.

The main problem faced in tackling online sexual crimes in Indonesia is the lack of public knowledge and awareness of the negative impacts of cybersex. In addition, law enforcement related to cybercrime is still hampered by various factors, including a lack of understanding of the application of criminal law in cyberspace. In this case, the role of Islamic education as part of prevention efforts is very much needed to build moral awareness and digital ethics from an early age. In the legal realm, although Indonesia already has regulations governing cybercrime, the implementation and public understanding of this law are still weak.

This study focuses on analyzing the phenomenon of cybersex in the context of Islamic education and criminal law in Indonesia. The location of this study will involve several schools and universities in big cities, as well as discussions with legal experts and Islamic educators, in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the role of each sector in overcoming

cybercrime. In addition, this study will involve data analysis from several reports of online sexual crime cases that have occurred in recent years.

The root of the cybersex phenomenon lies in the imbalance between technological development and moral understanding in society. Rapidly developing technology is often followed by a lack of education regarding moral boundaries that should be maintained in cyberspace (Drew, 2020; Akhuai et al., 2022; Nurhayati et al., 2021). In addition, the weak law enforcement system against cybersex perpetrators and the low public awareness of the negative impacts of this behavior are also deep roots of the problem (Shah, 2019). In this context, Islamic education that emphasizes ethical values and morality has great potential to be a preventive solution to this problem.

This study offers a solution in the form of integrating Islamic-based moral education into formal and informal education curricula, which can provide a better understanding of the dangers and consequences of cybersex behavior. In addition, this study also highlights the importance of stricter and more adaptive law enforcement to technological developments, as well as the need for a public awareness campaign regarding the importance of digital ethics. With a holistic approach involving education, law, and social awareness, it is hoped that a society can be created that is more aware of the threat of cybersex.

Several previous studies have shown that the phenomenon of cybercrime is increasingly widespread, and many of them highlight the role of religious education in preventing cybercrime (Mahbubi et al., 2025; Khalish & Widiastara, 2023). In addition, research on the effectiveness of criminal law in overcoming cybercrime in Indonesia has also been conducted by several researchers such as Hassan, who found that although criminal law related to cybercrime already exists, its implementation is still minimal in the field (Hassan, 2022; Nadriana & Sukmana, 2022). This study complements and deepens previous studies by focusing on the interaction between Islamic education and criminal law in preventing cybersex.

Based on this background, the research objectives in this study are: (1) To describe the role of Islamic education in preventing online sexual crimes among Indonesian society (2) To describe the extent of the effectiveness of Indonesian criminal law in handling cybersex cases (3) To describe the solutions that can be offered to reduce the negative impacts of cybersex through the integration of education and law enforcement at Plered Islamic Middle School, Cirebon.

The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to connect two disciplines that often stand alone, namely Islamic education and criminal law, in the context of preventing online sexual crimes. This study also proposes an integration model between religious-based moral education and law enforcement in creating a more responsible society in using technology.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study focuses on the analysis of cybercrime phenomena, especially online sexual crimes (cybersex), in the context of Islamic education and criminal law. The objects of this study were students and teachers at SMP Islam Plered, Cirebon, which is one of the Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. The main focus of this study is to explore students' understanding of cybersex and the role of Islamic education in preventing cybercrime, by considering external factors that influence their understanding, such as the use of technology and digital devices among adolescents.

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to deeply understand the phenomena that occur at SMP Islam Plered Cirebon regarding cybersex and Islamic education, as well as to obtain a comprehensive picture of the role of education in preventing these crimes. This method also provides an opportunity for researchers to interpret various data obtained from the field and provide a more holistic insight into the problem being studied (Creswell, 2021).

The data sources in this study consist of two categories: primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with correspondents consisting of students and teachers at SMP Islam Plered Cirebon. While secondary data were obtained from relevant literature, such as books, articles, journals, and official documents related to the topics of cybercrime, Islamic education, and criminal law. The characteristics of correspondents consist of:

Table 1.
Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Student	Teacher
Number of Respondents	30 students (representatives from various classes)	5 teachers
Age	14–16 years (grade IX of Islamic Middle School)	30–45 years
Gender	Male and female (each gender is represented)	Male and female (each gender is represented)
Socio-Economic Background	Diverse (from middle to lower class)	Diverse (teachers with experience in religious education)
Level of education	Islamic Junior High School Students	Teachers who teach Islamic Religious and Citizenship Education

The data collection techniques used in this study were interviews, observations, and documentation studies. In-depth interviews were used to explore students' and teachers' understanding of cybersex, as well as how they view the role of Islamic education and criminal law in combating online sexual crimes (Teguh et al., 2023; Bachiochi & Weiner, 2010).

Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, allowing researchers to delve into specific topics, but remain flexible in responding to information that emerged during the conversation. Observations were conducted in the classroom and school environment to see the extent to which the Islamic education material taught was relevant to cybersex prevention. Documentation studies were conducted by collecting related materials used in schools, such as curricula and learning modules.

Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation will be analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques with a thematic approach. The first step is to transcribe all the results of interviews and observations that have been conducted. Then, the data will be grouped based on emerging themes, such as students' understanding of cybersex, the role of Islamic education, and criminal law awareness.

The analysis process was carried out by following these steps: (1) Thematic Coding: Coding various themes that emerged from interview and observation data. (2) Data Organizing:

Grouping data based on relevant themes. (3) Thematic Analysis: Analyzing the relationships between themes to understand how these factors interact in shaping students' and teachers' understanding of cybersex and the role of Islamic education and criminal law. (4) Interpretation: Summarizing the main findings related to the role of Islamic education in preventing cybersex and evaluating the effectiveness of criminal law in combating cybercrime (Ahmad & Muslimah, 2021; Onwuegbuzie, 2010).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, this study used triangulation techniques. Triangulation was carried out by comparing data obtained from various sources, namely interviews with students, interviews with teachers, field observations, and documentation studies. Thus, the data obtained can strengthen each other and provide a more objective picture of the phenomenon being studied. In addition, the researcher also conducted member checking, namely asking several correspondents to check whether the results of the transcribed interviews were in accordance with their views. This aims to increase the validity of the data obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Role of Islamic Education in Preventing Online Sexual Crimes

This study involved 30 students and 5 teachers at SMP Islam Plered, Cirebon, focusing on students' and teachers' understanding of the role of Islamic education in preventing online sexual crimes (cybersex). Data were collected through interviews and observations, as well as documentation studies of teaching materials at the school. The following are the main findings obtained from questions about the role of Islamic education in preventing online sexual crimes:

Table 2.
Students' and Teachers' Understanding of the Role of Islamic Education in Preventing Online Sexual Crimes

Statement	Students (n=30)	Teacher (n=5)
Islamic education can shape characters that avoid indecent behavior in cyberspace.	25 (83%)	5 (100%)
Islamic education can provide ethical boundaries in the use of technology	28 (93%)	5 (100%)
Islamic education teaches moral values that are important in preventing cybersex	27 (90%)	5 (100%)
The role of parents is important in accompanying children's moral education regarding internet use.	20 (67%)	4 (80%)
Islamic religious education teaches about the importance of maintaining one's modesty and self-respect.	26 (87%)	5 (100%)

From the table above, the majority of students and teachers agree that Islamic education has a significant role in shaping characters that avoid indecent behavior and provide ethical boundaries in the use of technology. Most students also showed an understanding of how Islamic education can prevent cybersex through moral and ethical teachings taught in religious subjects.

Other researchers who highlight the importance of Islamic religious education in preventing cybercrime also show results that are in line with these findings. For example, research by Mahbubi found that Islamic education provides a strong moral foundation to avoid detrimental behavior, including cybersex, by instilling ethical values and morality in the use of technology (Mahbubi et al., 2025). The same thing was also found by Hassan who stated that Islamic religious education has a preventive role in preventing deviant behavior through teaching about the boundaries in Islam, including in cyberspace (Hassan, 2022).

According to the theory of Islamic moral education, as explained by Al-Ghazali, religious education does not only focus on aspects of worship, but also on the formation of good character and prevention of all forms of moral deviation, including online sexual crimes (Al-Ghazali, 1997). This concept teaches that every individual should protect themselves from bad behavior that damages self-respect, and in this case, it is related to cybersex behavior that damages a person's morality and honor.

From a theological perspective, Islamic teachings strongly emphasize the importance of maintaining one's honor (*haya*) and private parts, both physically and in cyberspace. As stated in Surah An-Nur (24:30-31), where Allah commands Muslims to lower their gaze and guard their private parts. In the context of cyberspace, this means avoiding the consumption or distribution of indecent content, which is often the root of the problem of the cybersex phenomenon.

This study is in line with the theory of Islamic education and morality put forward by Al-Ghazali (1997) and Goffman (2023) regarding the formation of social norms through education. Al-Ghazali stated that Islamic education is one of the effective ways to form a character that can distinguish between right and wrong behavior. In this case, Islamic education can guide students to recognize the dangers of cybersex and prevent involvement in online sexual crimes by giving them a clear understanding of Islamic ethics and morality.

Goffman also stated that a person's social identity is greatly influenced by interactions that occur in various social spaces, both physical and digital. Islamic education, in this case, provides guidelines for individuals to regulate their behavior in cyberspace by maintaining morality and honor (Goffman, 2023).

Overall, this study shows that Islamic education has a very important role in preventing online sexual crimes, especially through the formation of moral character and teaching ethics in the use of technology. Most respondents, both students and teachers, stated that Islamic education can provide values that guide them to avoid cybersex, by emphasizing the importance of maintaining self-respect and moral boundaries in cyberspace.

The formulation of the problem proposed in this study is "What is the role of Islamic education in preventing online sexual crimes?". Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that Islamic education plays a very large role in preventing online sexual crimes through instilling strong moral values, teaching about the ethics of using technology, and forming characters that maintain self-respect. Most students and teachers at SMP Islam Plered Cirebon agree that Islamic religious education has a positive influence in preventing indecent behavior, including in the digital space.

This study also confirms the theory that links moral education to crime prevention, especially those related to online sexual behavior, which is increasingly rampant along with the development of technology. Therefore, strengthening Islamic education in the school curriculum, especially in learning digital morals and ethics, is a very important step in facing the challenges of cybercrime in the future.

B. The Effectiveness of Indonesian Criminal Law in Handling Cybersex Cases

This study also focuses on the effectiveness of Indonesian criminal law in handling cybersex cases. Data obtained through interviews with students, teachers, and document analysis on laws and regulations related to Indonesian criminal law provide an overview of their understanding and views on criminal law in the context of online sexual crimes. The following are the main findings from the question of the effectiveness of Indonesian criminal law in handling cybersex cases.

Table 3.
Understanding the Effectiveness of Indonesian Criminal Law in Handling Cybersex Cases

Statement	Students (n=30)	Teacher (n=5)
Indonesian criminal law has been quite effective in handling cybersex cases.	8 (27%)	3 (60%)
Punishment for cybersex perpetrators is sufficient to provide a deterrent effect	5 (17%)	2 (40%)
Lack of public understanding of criminal law related to cybersex	20 (67%)	4 (80%)
Indonesia's criminal law needs updating to tackle digital crime	25 (83%)	5 (100%)
Law enforcement against cybersex cases is still weak	15 (50%)	3 (60%)

Based on the interview results, most students and teachers feel that the current Indonesian criminal law is still not fully effective in handling cybersex cases. Although there is awareness of the need for strict punishment for cybersex perpetrators, most respondents consider that law enforcement is still weak and has not provided enough of a deterrent effect. This response shows that although laws have been in place to deal with digital crimes, their implementation has not been optimal.

Other researchers, such as Nadriana and Sukmana, stated that although Indonesia has regulations related to cybercrime, including cybersex, its effectiveness is still limited. This is due to the lack of public understanding of existing criminal law regulations and the low level of legal literacy among citizens (Nadriana & Sukmana, 2022). In addition, challenges in digital law enforcement are also related to limited human resources and technology that can monitor online crimes effectively.

The theory of modern criminal law, put forward by Djamal, states that criminal law must be able to adapt to the development of the times, including in dealing with digital crimes such as cybersex (Djamal, 2019). However, although there are laws regulating cybercrime, such as the ITE (Information and Electronic Transactions) Law No. 19 of 2016, its implementation still faces many obstacles, such as weak supervision and law enforcement that has not fully kept pace with technological developments.

According to the crime prevention theory by Antony Duff, the criminal law system must provide a deterrent effect and educate the public not to get involved in crime. In the context of cybersex, this theory suggests that Indonesian criminal law should not only focus on

punishment, but also on prevention through education and counseling about the dangers of online crime (Duff, 2022; Gardner, 2002).

In this case, the effectiveness of criminal law in dealing with cybersex is highly dependent on two factors: (1) how well the public understands the existing law, and (2) how effectively law enforcement can be carried out by law enforcement officers. Therefore, many researchers suggest updating and strengthening the capacity of the Indonesian criminal law system related to cybercrime.

Based on the data obtained, the effectiveness of Indonesian criminal law in handling cybersex cases still faces many challenges. Although there are already regulations such as the ITE Law that regulates online sexual crimes, most respondents, both students and teachers, think that law enforcement is not yet effective enough. This is influenced by the lack of public understanding of criminal law related to cybercrime and the weak implementation of existing laws.

This study confirms the findings in previous literature, which state that even though Indonesia has appropriate regulations, challenges in enforcing digital law remain large. Several researchers such as Nadriana and Sukmana (2022) and Giddens (2015) also emphasize the importance of updating criminal law and strengthening the law enforcement system to deal with cybercrime, especially cybersex, which is increasingly rampant.

The formulation of the research problem is "How effective is Indonesian criminal law in handling cybersex cases?". Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that Indonesian criminal law has sufficient legal basis to handle cybersex cases, but its effectiveness is still limited. The majority of respondents consider that law enforcement is still weak and there needs to be an update in the Indonesian legal system to keep up with technological developments and cybercrime. In addition, a better understanding of the law and increased public awareness are needed to support the success of overcoming online crime, including cybersex.

This study underlines the need to improve legal literacy among the public and update criminal law regulations to be more responsive to technological developments. Thus, Indonesian criminal law needs to be more adaptive and effective in dealing with the growing phenomenon of cybercrime, especially related to online sexual crimes.

C. Solutions to Reduce the Negative Impact of Cybersex at Plered Islamic Middle School, Cirebon

This study also aims to explore solutions that can be taken to reduce the negative impact of cybersex in the environment of SMP Islam Plered Cirebon. Data were obtained through interviews with students, teachers, and document analysis regarding policies implemented in schools related to the use of technology and prevention of cybersex. The following are the main findings regarding solutions that are considered effective in reducing the negative impact of cybersex in schools.

Table 5.
Solutions to Reduce the Negative Impacts of Cybersex

Statement	Students (n=30)	Teacher (n=5)
Increasing education about the dangers of cybersex through religious and civics lessons	28 (93%)	5 (100%)
Addition of extracurricular activities that teach wise internet use	22 (73%)	4 (80%)

Statement	Students (n=30)	Teacher (n=5)
Restricting internet access in schools and monitoring the use of digital devices	18 (60%)	5 (100%)
The role of parents in supervising the use of technology at home	25 (83%)	5 (100%)
Implementation of strict penalties for violations related to cybersex behavior	12 (40%)	4 (80%)

The data shows that the majority of students and teachers agree that more intensive education about the dangers of cybersex is essential. Increasing education through more in-depth religious and civics lessons is considered effective in instilling moral and ethical values related to safe internet use. Restricting internet access in schools is also considered necessary, but there are differences of opinion regarding the application of strict punishment. Students are more likely to consider solutions in the form of education and access restrictions to be more effective than the application of strict punishment, which is often considered a less constructive solution.

Other researchers, such as Dwi Astuti, argue that moral and ethical education about the wise use of technology can prevent individuals from engaging in negative behavior in cyberspace (Dwi Astuti, 2020). The study found that teaching religious and civic values that teach responsibility towards technology can play a major role in shaping students' behavior in cyberspace. This is in accordance with the findings of this study, where the majority of respondents considered religious and civic education as an important solution in reducing the negative impacts of cybersex.

The theory of Islamic moral education, developed by Al-Ghazali (1997), emphasizes the importance of religious education in forming good morals and avoiding destructive behavior, including in cyberspace. Islamic religious education not only teaches worship, but also guides individuals to understand and avoid behavior that is contrary to Islamic teachings, including in digital interactions. In line with this, the theory of Islamic moral education states that students must be taught to understand and uphold ethical values that include how to use technology wisely.

In addition, Hirschi's social control theory states that a strong relationship between individuals and society (family, school, friends) will prevent deviant behavior, such as cybersex (Hirschi's, 1969). Thus, solutions in the form of parental roles and teacher guidance can reduce the negative impacts of cybersex. Restricting internet access in schools and stricter supervision of the use of digital devices are also social control measures that can prevent deviant behavior among students.

The application of strict punishment in some cybersex cases is also supported by the theory of restorative justice, which emphasizes the recovery and rehabilitation of victims and the submission of responsibility to the perpetrators. However, if not accompanied by proper education and prevention, punishment that is only reactive can worsen the problem and be ineffective in the long term.

This study shows that the solution to reduce the negative impact of cybersex in SMP Islam Plered Cirebon focuses more on education and character building of students rather than the application of strict punishment. The majority of respondents (both students and teachers) agreed that improving religious and civic education about the dangers of cybersex, as well as

limiting internet access in schools and parental supervision at home, are effective solutions. The application of strict punishment is only considered as a last resort that is not effective enough for long-term prevention.

This finding is in line with existing literature, such as research by Dwi Astuti (2020) which suggests that moral and religious education plays a key role in reducing cybercrime. In addition, the theory of Islamic moral education and social control supports a preventive approach based on religious values, social supervision, and access restrictions that can reduce the potential for cybersex.

The formulation of the research problem is "What solutions can be applied to reduce the negative impact of cybersex in SMP Islam Plered Cirebon?". Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the solution considered most effective by students and teachers is increasing education about the dangers of cybersex through religious and civics lessons, as well as stricter supervision of technology use at home and school. This solution is based on the understanding that prevention based on education and social control is more effective than relying solely on strict punishment. Therefore, the implementation of more comprehensive education and structured supervision can contribute greatly to reducing the negative impact of cybersex among students.

The important implications of the results of this study are that first, Islamic education has been proven to have a vital role in preventing cybersex, so schools need to strengthen the religious education curriculum by including material on digital ethics and healthy use of technology. Second, the weak effectiveness of criminal law in handling cybersex cases indicates the need for legal system reform and increased capacity of law enforcement in handling cybercrime. Third, the high support for a preventive approach through education compared to a punitive approach indicates that schools and educational institutions need to develop comprehensive prevention programs, including involving the active role of parents in supervising children's use of technology. Fourth, the lack of public understanding of the legal aspects of cybersex suggests the need to increase digital legal literacy among the wider community.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the challenges of online sexual crimes (cybersex) through data analysis from interviews with students and teachers and a review of legal and educational theories, especially at SMP Islam Plered Cirebon. The results of the study indicate that Islamic education plays an important role in prevention through instilling moral and ethical values, while the implementation of Indonesian criminal law in handling cybersex cases still needs to be optimized.

The study found that a comprehensive solution is needed, including increasing education about the dangers of cybersex, monitoring the use of technology, and restricting internet access.

The proposed recommendations include strengthening Islamic-based moral education in the school curriculum through teacher training and development of learning modules, as well as implementing social campaigns to raise public awareness about the negative impacts of cybersex involving cooperation between the government and educational institutions.

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