

The Correlation of Smartphone Use with Emotional Intelligence of Students at the Alma Ata University Students' Islamic Boarding School

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the level of emotional intelligence and analyze the correlation between smartphone usage and emotional intelligence of students at the Student Islamic Boarding School (PPM) of Alma Ata University. The background of the study is based on the rapid development of communication technology, which has a significant impact on students. Uncontrolled smartphone usage has the potential to trigger individualistic attitudes and reduce social sensitivity (*phubbing*) (Sulastris et al., 2023). The sampling technique used in this study was simple random sampling. The research method used was a quantitative correlational approach, with data collection through observation and questionnaires distributed to 78 respondents. Data analysis was performed using a simple linear regression test using SPSS 20.0 for Windows software. The results showed that the majority of students (92.31%) had moderate or controlled smartphone usage, while the majority had moderate (84.62%) to high (15.38%) emotional intelligence levels. The correlation test found a significance value of 0.023 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a significant but weak positive correlation between smartphone usage and emotional intelligence, with a contribution of 6.6%. This study concluded that wise smartphone use for productivity can support the stability of students' emotional intelligence, although most other emotional intelligence factors are influenced by variables outside the study.

Keywords: smartphone use, emotional intelligence, student

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tingkat kecerdasan emosional dan serta menganalisis korelasi antara penggunaan *smartphone* terhadap kecerdasan emosional santri di Pondok Pesantren Mahasiswa (PPM) Universitas Alma Ata. Latar belakang penelitian didasarkan pada pesatnya perkembangan teknologi komunikasi yang memberikan pengaruh besar bagi santri, di mana penggunaan *smartphone* yang tidak terkontrol berpotensi memicu sikap individualistik dan menurunkan sensitivitas sosial (*phubbing*) (Sulastris et al., 2023). Teknik pengambilan sampel pada penelitian ini menggunakan teknik pengambilan sampel *simple random sampling*. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kuantitatif korelasional dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi dan penyebaran kuesioner kepada 78 responden. Teknik analisis data dilakukan menggunakan uji regresi linier sederhana dengan bantuan perangkat lunak *SPSS 20.0 for windows*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan *smartphone* mayoritas santri berada pada kategori sedang atau terkendali (92,31%), sementara tingkat kecerdasan emosional mayoritas berada pada kategori sedang (84,62%) hingga tinggi (15,38%). Berdasarkan uji korelasi, ditemukan nilai signifikansi sebesar 0,023 ($p < 0,05$) yang berarti terdapat korelasi positif yang signifikan namun dalam kategori lemah antara penggunaan *smartphone* dan kecerdasan emosional dengan kontribusi sebesar 6,6%. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa penggunaan *smartphone* yang bijak untuk

produktivitas dapat mendukung stabilitas kecerdasan emosional santri, meskipun sebagian besar faktor kecerdasan emosional lainnya dipengaruhi oleh variabel di luar penelitian ini.

Kata Kunci: penggunaan smartphone, kecerdasan emosional, santri

INTRODUCTION

The rapid and significant development of technology has guided the world into an era of advanced and modern globalization. In this era, humans are required to keep pace with technological advancements in various aspects to meet increasingly numerous and complex needs. Humans are also expected to adapt to the times, where life is demanded to be more rational, impactful, and efficient. A smartphone is an electronic device created in a small physical form to assist humans in their daily lives (Hakikin, 2017).

The swift progress in technology and communication during this digital era has exerted a major influence on various groups of society, including *santri* (students) living in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). A clear example of this technological advancement is the use of smartphones. Currently, smartphones function not merely as communication tools, but also as media for accessing information, social media, and entertainment, as well as serving as platforms for online learning (Indri Kristiwati, Irfan, 2020).

The phenomenon of smartphone use among *santri* can be observed through the frequency of its use in daily routines. Many *santri* utilize smartphones to search for learning materials, read resources, or participate in online studies and organizational activities. However, on the other hand, there are also *santri* who use smartphones for non-productive activities, such as playing games, watching time-consuming content, or accessing social media excessively. This raises concerns regarding the life balance of *santri*, who are ideally expected to focus more on deepening religious knowledge and character building (Adnan et al., 2017).

Amidst the surge of digitalization in this globalization era, one crucial aspect for *santri* to possess is emotional intelligence (Emotional Quotient/EQ). Emotional Quotient encompasses an individual's ability to recognize and control their own emotions, understand the feelings of others, establish good social relationships, and handle pressure or conflict wisely. For *santri*, emotional intelligence is vital for social interaction, maintaining etiquette, and forming religious and social characters (Bariyyah & Latifah, 2019).

The phenomenon of technological use in the current era of globalization has positioned Indonesia as a country with a very high level of mobile device dependency. According to the latest report from Data Reportal 2024, the Indonesian people spend an average of approximately 6 hours and 5 minutes every day accessing the internet via smartphones. This dominance is increasingly

evident among college students, where the APJII 2024 report notes that the internet penetration rate in this productive age group has reached a significant figure of 98.64%. This condition reflects that smartphones are no longer just communication tools, but have become an integral part of the academic and social lives of students, including those pursuing education within a *pesantren* environment.

However, it is regrettable that uncontrolled smartphone use can diminish a *santri's* ability to manage their emotions. For instance, there is a tendency toward individualistic attitudes, anxiety when not holding a smartphone also known as *no mobile phone phobia* (nomophobia) or reduced social sensitivity due to being overly focused on the virtual world, known as *phone snubbing* (phubbing). This poses a serious challenge for *santri* at the Alma Ata University Students' Islamic Boarding School, where emotional intelligence (EQ) is highly needed to maintain empathy and build a religious character that is sensitive to the surrounding environment (Sulastri et al., 2023).

Consequently, this research is expected not only to provide academic benefits by enriching the literature on the relationship between technology and emotional intelligence but also to offer practical value for students, guardians, boarding school administrators, and the university in formulating policies or coaching programs that are responsive to modern challenges. Based on the various phenomena described in this background, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "The Correlation Between Smartphone Usage and Emotional Intelligence of Students at the Alma Ata University Students' Islamic Boarding School".

METHOD

The approach used in this research is a quantitative correlational approach, which aims to detail and clarify the relationship between research variables and existing hypotheses or theories to determine the influence resulting from the relationship between these two variables, as well as to generalize the observed social phenomena. This research method is based on existing theoretical concepts and knowledge, which leads to the emergence of a problem. This problem formulation is used to understand the research results based on data collected in the field. The data obtained can be in the form of scores from the relationship or correlation between smartphone use and students' emotional intelligence in the form of quantitatively significant figures (Kuncoro et al., 2023).

Beryman states that quantitative research is research involving theory, design, and hypotheses used to determine a topic. Furthermore, to reach the conclusion stage, support is used for data collection, processing, and analysis. This research is based on empirical or direct experience and is supported by numerical data and figures. This study possesses continuous statistical power and addresses the hypotheses (Kuncoro et al., 2023). Accordingly, this study employs a correlative

quantitative research type to determine the relationship between smartphone use as variable X and students' emotional intelligence as variable Y.

In this study, the researcher adopted a probability sampling technique with a random sampling approach, where sample members are drawn from the population randomly without any specific criteria within the population being sampled (Sugiyono, 2013). To determine the number of samples, the researcher took informants from a portion of the student as the "focus sample" drawn from that "focus population." In the procedure for determining a representative sample size from a population, as developed by Isaac and Michael in Sugiyono, the determination of the sample size is based on the establishment of an allowable margin of error (e). Common tolerance levels used in this context range from 1%, 5%, and 10% (Sugiyono, 2013).

Therefore, based on the population data of 102 students with a 5% error rate, the required sample size is 78 students. Consequently, the data in this study can be categorized as quantitative research data in the form of an interval scale. The use of interval scale measurement in this study is intended to classify the variables to be measured so that errors do not occur in data analysis or in the subsequent research steps (Mahmud, 2022).

In this study, the researcher employed two data validation techniques before the instruments were used: validity testing and reliability testing. For the subsequent steps, the researcher analyzed the data and performed calculations to address the research questions and test the proposed hypotheses. In analyzing the data, the researcher utilized the Pearson Product-Moment correlation with the assistance of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0 for Windows software (Sugiyono, 2013). Prior to conducting the correlation test, the researcher performed normality tests, linearity tests, and inferential analysis through simple linear regression, the results of which are further described.

HYPOTHESIS

A research hypothesis can be defined as a tentative or provisional answer to a research question formulated in the form of a question. This answer is provisional because it is based solely on theoretical foundations and a review of relevant literature, but is not yet supported by concrete empirical evidence (facts). The validity of this hypothesis must be scientifically verified through the data collection process and then tested for significance using statistical analysis (Sugiyono, 2013).

The formulation of the hypothesis, based on the conceptual framework previously established by the researcher, will subsequently be tested to determine its validity whether the hypothesis will be accepted or rejected. Based on the conceptual framework above, the hypotheses in this study are:

H_0 = Smartphone use does not significantly affect the emotional intelligence of students at the Alma Ata University Student Islamic Boarding School. The intensity of smartphone use does not affect the students' ability to recognize, manage, and understand emotions within themselves or in others. H_a = Smartphone use has a significant effect on the emotional intelligence of students at the Alma Ata University Student Islamic Boarding School. The higher the intensity of smartphone use, the lower the students' emotional intelligence due to a lack of social interaction and emotional regulation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The results of this study were analyzed using simple linear regression analysis techniques with the SPSS 20.0 for Windows software. Prior to testing the hypotheses through simple regression analysis and Pearson Product-Moment correlation, several assumption tests were conducted, specifically normality and linearity tests.

Categorization

The determination of categorization is based on the desired level of differentiation; however, the criteria to be used must first be established based on a hypothetical framework (Suseno, 2012).

a. Classification of Emotional Intelligence

Sample Category	Norm Range	Number	Percentage
Low	$X < 98$	0	0%
Moderate	$98 \leq X < 147$	66	84,62%
High	$147 \leq X$	12	15,38%

Table 1. Classification of Emotional Intelligence

Based on the table above, none of the samples fall into the low emotional intelligence category. Meanwhile, based on the table above, 66 out of 78 samples or 84.62% of the samples fall into the moderate emotional intelligence category. Based on the table above, there are also 12 out of 78 samples, or 15.38% of the samples, that fall into the high emotional intelligence category. These results indicate that students at the Alma Ata University student boarding school possess emotional intelligence in the moderate to high categories in other words, adequate.

b. Categorization of Smartphone Use

Sample Category	Norm Range	Number	Percentage
Low	$X < 42$	5	6,41%

Moderate	$42 \leq X < 63$	72	92,31%
High	$63 \leq X$	1	1,28%

Table 2. Categorization of Smartphone Use

Based on the table above, 5 out of 78 samples equivalent to 6.41% of the samples fall into the low category for smartphone usage. Meanwhile, based on the table above, 72 out of 78 samples equivalent to 92.31% of the samples fall into the moderate category for smartphone usage. The table above also shows that 1 out of 78 samples, or 1.28%, falls into the high category for smartphone usage. These results indicate that students at the Alma Ata University Islamic boarding school fall into the moderate category or, in other words, have controlled smartphone usage.

Assumption Test

(Suseno, 2012) explains that regression analysis must pass through assumption test, which include normality and linierity test. The result of the assumption test in this study are as follows:

Normality Test

A normality test was conducted to determine whether the research data is normally distributed. If the show $p > 0.05$, the data is declared to be normally distributed; conversely, if the results show $p < 0.05$, the data is declared not to be normally distributed. To determine the p -value, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z (K-SZ) value in the "Tests of Normality" table is observed. The results of the normality test for smartphone use and emotional intelligence are as follows,

Variable	K-SZ	P	Normality Rule	Description
DV	1,114	0,603	$P > 0,05$	Normal
IV	0,863	0,603	$P > 0,05$	Normal

Table 3. Result of The Normality test for research data

Based on the table above, it can be observed that the emotional intelligence variable has a K-SZ coefficient of 1.114. The smartphone use variable has a K-SZ coefficient of 0.863. Both variables in this study have a significance level of $p > 0.05$, specifically 0.603; thus, both variables are normally distributed.

Linearity Test

A linearity test was conducted to determine whether the research data is linear or not, meaning wether the data follows a linear correlation line and whether it indicates a positive or negative correlation. The research data is declared linear if the p -value < 0.05 on the linearity index

and $p > 0.05$ on the deviation from linearity index. If these two conditions are not met, the relationship is considered non-linear. The results of the linearity test for the smartphone use and emotional intelligence variables are as follows,

Variable	Sig. Linearity Rule (p)	<i>Linierity</i>	<i>Deviation from linierity</i>	Description
DV dengan IV	P < 0,05	0,017	0,107	Linear

Table 4. Results of The Linearity test for the research data

Based on the table above, it can be observed that the linearity value for the relationship between the smartphone use variable and the emotional intelligence variable is 0.017 ($p < 0.05$), and the deviation from linearity value is 0.107 ($p > 0.05$). Consequently, it can be concluded that there is a linear relationship between the smartphone use variable and emotional intelligence.

Inferential Analysis Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Hypothesis testing was conducted using simple linear regression analysis to examine the extent of the relationship between the smartphone use variable as the independent variable and the emotional intelligence variable as the dependent variable. Regression analysis was also employed to determine the role of the independent variable in influencing the dependent variable, both collectively and individually. The results of the research hypothesis testing through simple regression analysis are as follows,

Sig. (2-tailed) p < 0,05	Variabel	DV	IV
		DV IV	0,023

Table 5. Correlation between smartphone use and emotional intelligence

Based on the correlation table above, it is indicated that the independent variable, smartphone use, has a significant positive but weak relationship with emotional intelligence. This is evidenced by the significance value (p) of 0.023, which is lower than the required threshold ($p < 0.05$). This result confirms that the usage of smartphones among students correlates with their emotional intelligence levels.

In addition to simple regression analysis, this study employed the Pearson Product-Moment correlation to test the hypothesis. The hypothesis is accepted if the significance value (p) is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). The Pearson Product-Moment correlation results are presented in the following table,

		DV	IV
DV	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	1	0,257
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>		0,023
	<i>N</i>	78	78
IV	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0,257	1
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	0,023	
	<i>N</i>	78	78

Table 6. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation

The table above that the Pearson Correlation coefficient (r) between smartphone use and emotional intelligence is 0.257 with a significance value (p) of 0.023. Since $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This indicates a significant positive relationship between the two variables, although the strength of the correlation is categorized as weak.

Furthermore, the effective contribution of the independent variable to the dependent variable can be determined through the following two tables,

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	441.609	1	441.609	5.358	0,023
Residual	6263.804	76	82.419		
Total	6705.449	77			

Table 7. Regression coefficients for smartphone use and emotional intelligence (ANOVA)

Model	R	R Square	R Square Change	Sig. F Change	Description
1	0,257	0,066	0,054	0,023	Significant

Table 8. Model Summary

Based on the ANOVA table, the F-value is 5.358 with a significance level of 0.023. According to the Model Summary table (Model 1), the independent variable (smartphone use) provides an effective contribution or influence of 6.6% ($R\ Square = 0.066$) on emotional intelligence. Meanwhile, the remaining 93.4% ($100\% - 6.6\%$) is influenced by other factors not included in this research model. This low percentage suggests that while smartphone use does play a role, other internal and external factors in the boarding school environment significantly contribute more to the students' emotional intelligence development.

DISCUSSION

Categorization of Smartphone Use and Emotional Intelligence Levels

The descriptive statistical analysis reveals that smartphone usage among students at the Alma Ata University Students' Islamic Boarding School (PPM) is predominantly within the moderate or controlled category. Specifically, 92.31% of the respondents (72 out of 78) demonstrate moderate usage, while only a small fraction falls into the high (1.28%) or low (6.41%) categories. This distribution indicates that although students utilized smartphones for communication, information seeking, and as learning media, they remain compliant with the boarding school's regulations designed to maintain discipline and academic focus. From Goleman (2025), perspective, this reflects high levels of self-awareness and self-management. Students who successfully adhere to boarding school rules and limit their screen time demonstrate emotional maturity in recognizing the impulse to "always be connected" and the ability to delay instant gratification from digital content. The data reveals a compelling phenomenon, wherein 92.31% of students fall into the reasonable use category. This figure is not merely a statistic, but rather a reflection of the successful regulatory system implemented at the Pondok Pesantren Mahasiswa (PPM) of Alma Ata University. Within a religious academic environment, smartphone utilization is no longer a total distraction; instead, it serves as a controlled, multifunctional tool. The predominance of this controlled category demonstrates that students are capable of leveraging technology as a medium for learning and information retrieval without breaching the established disciplinary boundaries. This underscores a 'collective awareness' that technology is a supporting tool, rather than the primary objective of pesantren life.

Regarding the dependent variable, the emotional intelligence of students also falls into favorable categories, with 84.62% at a moderate level and 15.38% at a high level. Interestingly, this study found no students (0%) in the low emotional intelligence category. This suggests that the *pesantren* environment provides a significant positive influence on students' ability to manage emotions, motivate themselves, and build productive social relationships through religious activities and disciplined routines (Purnomo, 2014). However, despite this supportive environment, uncontrolled phubbing behavior remains a threat to social sensitivity (Yusnita & M, 2017). When face-to-face interaction decreases due to smartphone dominance, students lose vital opportunities to practice social skills, such as reading body language and catching emotional cues the very foundations of interpersonal health emphasized by Goleman. This study correlates these findings with (Daniel Goleman's (2025) theory of emotional intelligence, particularly the dimensions of self-awareness and self-management. The students' ability to maintain a controlled or reasonable usage category amidst the onslaught of instant digital content serves as a tangible manifestation of delayed gratification. Although students are aware of the persistent urge to always be connected, they possess the emotional control necessary to limit their smartphone duration in compliance with the established

pesantren regulations. This demonstrates that indicators of emotional maturity have a positive relationship with self-efficacy in regulating behavior.

One particularly striking finding is that 0% of students exhibit low emotional intelligence, whereas 84.62% are categorized as controlled and 15.38% as high. This outcome reinforces the premise that the pesantren environment serves as a social and spiritual buffer. The structured religious routines train students in stress management, self-motivation, and empathy cultivation through communal engagement. Consistent with Purnomo (2014), pesantren routines foster emotional stability typically unavailable in conventional boarding houses or domestic environments, thus enhancing students' capacity for productive social relationships. However, even within a controlled framework, smartphone dependency potentially diminishes face-to-face interactions and social skills both critical dimensions of emotional intelligence. Because authentic social interaction hinges on the capacity to decode body language and vocal inflections, smartphone dominance may deprive students of opportunities to refine empathy and social awareness. This mirrors the caution voiced by Yusnita & M (2017), who noted that diminished sensitivity is an inevitable trade-off when digital engagement emotionally supplants physical presence.

Correlation Analysis: The Interplay Between Digital Habits and EQ

The hypothesis testing conducted via SPSS 20.0 for Windows using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation yielded a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.023. Since this value is lower than the significance threshold of 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. This confirms a significant correlation between smartphone use (Variable X) and emotional intelligence (Variable Y) among students. Theoretically, this confirms Daniel Goleman (2025), model of emotional intelligence, where digital usage patterns interact dynamically with the five dimensions of emotional competence. The relationship identified in this study is positive, implying that when smartphone use is managed wisely and directed toward productivity, a student's emotional intelligence tends to remain stable or even increase. However, the strength of this correlation is categorized as weak. Based on the R-Square value, smartphone use provides an effective contribution of only 6.6% toward emotional intelligence. This small contribution suggests that smartphone use acts as a positive catalyst for self-motivation when used for digital literacy and learning. In this context, students channel their emotions into productive activities. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of this tool is highly dependent on self-management; if usage leads to distraction and laziness, it significantly reduces the student's intrinsic motivation to engage in the spiritual and academic life of the *pesantren*.

Hypothesis testing using SPSS 20.0 with the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation method

yielded a 2-tailed significance value (p-value) of 0.023. Within quantitative research paradigms, this output is evaluated against the standard alpha level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Because $0.023 < 0.05$, there is statistically significant evidence to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) in favor of the alternative hypothesis (H_a). This substantiates that the correlation between smartphone utilization (Variable X) and emotional intelligence (Variable Y) among pesantren students is not a random occurrence, but a statistically significant linear relationship. Additionally, the analysis indicates a positive correlation, demonstrating a direct relationship between both variables; as smartphone management becomes more structured and productive, students' emotional intelligence tends to stabilize or improve. From a theoretical standpoint, these findings align with Daniel Goleman's (2025) emotional intelligence theory. Students' digital behavior interacts dynamically with Goleman's five fundamental dimensions: (1) self-awareness, enabling students to discern when smartphone use becomes a distraction; (2) self-management, reflecting the capacity to control the urge for constant social media consumption; (3) self-motivation, where smartphones are harnessed to foster academic engagement and digital literacy; (4) empathy, manifested in managing screen duration to maintain environmental and social awareness; and (5) social skills, which empower students to employ smartphones for healthy, collaborative daily interactions.

Although the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant, this study reveals a critical fact: the strength of the correlation falls into the weak category. The coefficient of determination (R-square) indicates an effective contribution of 6.6%. This figure entails a highly crucial two-way interpretation. On one hand, the 6.6% demonstrates that when smartphones are utilized for digital literacy, accessing course materials, or supporting religious studies, they can act as a positive catalyst that enhances self-motivation. Students successfully channel their emotional energy into productive digital activities. On the other hand, the vast majority of the variance in students' emotional intelligence (93.4%) is influenced by factors external to smartphone usage. This dominant portion is highly likely shaped by the pesantren ecosystem itself, such as disciplined worship routines, direct peer interactions, guidance from *kijai* or *ustadz*, and a dense, structured daily schedule. Smartphone is thus conceptualized as a neutral tool, the impact of which depends entirely on the user's internal locus of control. When students' self-regulation functions effectively, the smartphone serves as an intellectual acceleration medium that supports emotional maturity and independent learning. Conversely, if self-management is deficient, the smartphone transforms into a source of distraction and a trigger for indolence. The long-term consequence of this is the erosion of students' intrinsic motivation to actively engage in both the spiritual life (such as congregational prayers and Quranic recitations) and the academic domain of the pesantren. Ultimately, the

squandering of time in the virtual world will diminish their emotional stability and social sensitivity.

The Role of Environmental Moderation and Residual Factors

The fact that smartphone use only contributes 6.6% to emotional intelligence indicates that the vast majority (93.4%) of the students' emotional intelligence is influenced by factors outside the scope of this study, such as physical and mental health, intellect, family upbringing, and social interactions outside the boarding school. Goleman (2025), highlights that the social and family environment is dominant in shaping EQ. In this research context, the discipline of the *pesantren*, supervision by administrators, and the routine of daily worship function as a "brake" against the negative impacts of digitalization. The *pesantren* provides an ecosystem that necessitates constant emotional management, which gradually mitigates the potential limitations arising from uncontrolled smartphone exposure. Ultimately, smartphone use has a dual-path impact. Positively, if managed with wise time management, it serves as a creative learning and communication tool that enhances discipline (Marpaung, 2018). Negatively, high frequency or uncontrolled use can trigger individualistic traits, nomophobia, and phubbing, which erode social sensitivity (Sulastri et al., 2023). The boarding school's regulations, such as night curfews and administrative monitoring, play a crucial role in lowering these risks. This study proves that smartphone use is not an absolute determinant of emotional intelligence but a variable that must be moderated by emotional intelligence itself. As students apply Goleman's five pillars, they become wiser in managing their devices, ensuring that technology remains a supportive tool rather than a hindrance to their emotional development.

The finding that smartphone usage contributes an effective variance of only 6.6% to the students' emotional intelligence (EQ) underscores an important methodological reality: smartphones are not a singular determinant factor. Conversely, a substantial proportion of 93.4% of the variance in emotional intelligence is shaped by variables external to the scope of this study. Referencing Daniel Goleman's framework, the social environment and family upbringing play the most pivotal and dominant roles in establishing the foundation of an individual's emotional intelligence. Key foundational factors such as psychological well-being, academic stress levels, and biological fitness directly influence the students' emotional stability. Furthermore, the manner in which students process information logically aids them in responding to emotional stimuli with greater maturity. Additionally, familial parenting styles encompassing crucial elements such as core values, emotional warmth, and communication patterns instilled by parents from an early age indirectly forge the baseline character for students' self-recognition. Moreover, social interactions outside the *pesantren* ecosystem, including peer relationships on campus, involvement in organizations, and engagement with the broader community, further enrich their social skills in navigating a heterogeneous reality

(Goleman, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Based on the study titled “The Correlation of Smartphone Use Toward the Emotional Intelligence of Students at the Universitas Alma Ata Student Pesantren,” it can be concluded that the majority of students maintain a controlled level of smartphone usage, reaching a percentage of 92.31%. This aligns with the students' emotional intelligence levels, which fall into the moderate (84.62%) to high (15.38%) categories, with no students found in the low category. Statistical analysis conducted via SPSS 20.0 yielded a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.023 ($p < 0.05$), confirming that the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the residual values are normally distributed. Although a significant positive correlation was identified, the strength of this relationship is categorized as weak, with an R Square value of 0.066. This indicates that smartphone use contributes 6.6% to emotional intelligence, while the remaining 93.4% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. Overall, this research demonstrates that wise and productivity-oriented smartphone use can support the stability and enhancement of students' emotional intelligence; conversely, uncontrolled usage has the potential to trigger negative behaviors.

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