



Smartphone Policies across School, Family, and Digital Contexts: Effects on Psychological Well-Being and Social Competence of Islamic Junior High School Students

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Abstract

The rapid digitalization of education has led to the emergence of various smartphone use policies in schools; however, comparative empirical evidence within non-Western contexts remains limited. This study aims to analyze the effects of total prohibition and regulated restriction policies on students' psychological well-being and social competence, with parental policy serving as a moderating variable. A comparative correlational approach was employed, involving students from several private Islamic junior high schools in Bukittinggi. The research instruments included adapted scales of psychological well-being, social behavior, and parental mediation. The findings indicate that students in schools implementing total prohibition policies demonstrate significantly higher levels of psychological well-being and social competence compared to those under regulated restriction policies, thereby failing to support the initial hypotheses. Further analysis reveals that parental policy functions as a moderator of psychological well-being and as a partial mediator of social competence. These findings are explained by the collectivist cultural context and strong religious values, which interpret prohibition as a form of collective protection. This study underscores the importance of cross-cultural perspectives in the examination of digital education policies.

Keywords: Smartphone Policy, Psychological Well-Being, Social Competence, Parental Mediation, Islamic Education.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has positioned smartphones as an integral component of adolescents' daily lives, including within educational settings. While these devices offer substantial opportunities for learning and connectivity, their pervasive use has also raised critical concerns regarding students' psychological well-being and social competence. Psychological well-being refers to a positive state of mental and emotional functioning that enables individuals to thrive, as conceptualized in the framework of Psychological Well-Being (Ryff, 1989). In parallel, social competence encompasses the ability to interact effectively and build meaningful interpersonal relationships (Rose-Krasnor, 1997). These two dimensions are widely recognized as essential indicators of healthy adolescent development in contemporary educational discourse.

Empirical evidence indicates a significant rise in smartphone dependency among adolescents in Indonesia. Data from the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers reveal that the majority of internet users access digital platforms through smartphones, with adolescents representing a dominant segment characterized by high penetration rates and prolonged daily usage (APJII, 2025). This trend is particularly evident in Sumatra, where substantial proportions of users engage with smartphones for extended periods each day. Such patterns underscore the urgency of examining how institutional policies regulate smartphone use in schools and how these policies shape students' psychosocial outcomes.

A growing body of literature has documented the adverse consequences of excessive smartphone use on adolescents' well-being and social functioning. For instance, intensive smartphone engagement has been shown to alter communication patterns, shifting interactions from direct verbal exchanges to mediated digital forms (Haomasan and Nofharina, 2018). Furthermore, problematic smartphone use has been consistently associated with diminished psychological well-being, including reduced self-acceptance, heightened social anxiety, and impaired interpersonal relationships (Büchi et al., 2018; Fajar A and Yani SH, 2020; Nurcholis, 2023). Collectively, these findings suggest that unregulated smartphone use may disrupt adolescents' psychosocial development, thereby necessitating structured and context-sensitive policy interventions within educational institutions.

Schools function as environments that foster holistic student development, aligning with the principles of health-promoting schools that emphasize mental health and social well-being alongside academic achievement (World Health Organization, 2021). In this regard, balanced policy approaches are often recommended to mitigate the risks associated with digital technology while simultaneously leveraging its educational potential (EU Kids Online, 2020). However, the formulation of such policies remains complex. Overly permissive approaches may exacerbate mental health risks and increase students' dependence on social media (Goodyear et al., 2025), whereas excessively restrictive policies may generate resistance, limit opportunities for developing digital literacy, and hinder adaptive social functioning (Livingstone et al., 2017; Selwyn and Aagaard, 2021). In extreme cases, such rigidity may negatively affect students' motivation, increase anxiety, and complicate social adjustment processes (Cha et al., 2023; Schmidt-Persson et al., 2024).

Despite increasing scholarly attention, empirical comparisons between different models of school smartphone policies remain limited, particularly within non-Western contexts. Recent international studies have begun to address this gap. For example, research conducted in the United Kingdom suggests that smartphone prohibition policies are associated with improved mental well-

being and reduced social media use (Goodyear et al., 2025), while other studies highlight variations in policy implementation and underlying rationales across schools (Randhawa et al., 2025). Within the Indonesian context, existing research has primarily focused on the benefits of smartphone restriction in educational settings without systematically comparing alternative policy models (Al-Saysar and Anirah, 2024). Consequently, a critical gap persists in understanding the comparative effectiveness of total prohibition versus regulated restriction policies, as well as the contextual factors that may influence their outcomes.

Family environments play a pivotal role in shaping adolescents' digital behavior. Parental mediation strategies have been shown to significantly influence how young individuals engage with technology, potentially reinforcing or attenuating the effects of institutional regulations (Fam et al., 2025; Shin and Lwin, 2022). The interaction between school-based policies and parental practices is therefore crucial in determining students' overall psychosocial development. Without incorporating this moderating dimension, assessments of policy effectiveness risk remaining incomplete and contextually detached.

This study is situated in Bukittinggi a city characterized by strong collectivist cultural values and Islamic traditions, which provide a distinctive socio-cultural context for examining digital behavior and policy acceptance. Variations in smartphone policies across private Islamic junior high schools in this region offer a unique opportunity to conduct a comparative analysis enriched by local wisdom and cultural norms. Within such a context, restrictive policies may be perceived not as limitations on individual autonomy but as collective efforts to ensure shared well-being and moral guidance.

The present study seeks to address the existing research gap by conducting a comparative analysis of total prohibition and regulated restriction smartphone policies and their effects on students' psychological well-being and social competence. Furthermore, it examines the moderating role of parental policy in shaping these relationships. By integrating institutional and familial perspectives within a culturally grounded framework, this study aims to contribute to the growing discourse on digital education policy and to provide empirically grounded recommendations for policymakers. Ultimately, this research underscores the importance of adopting cross-cultural approaches in understanding the complex dynamics of smartphone use and its implications for adolescent development.

Literature Review

The regulation of smartphone use in schools has emerged as a critical issue within contemporary educational ecosystems shaped by rapid digital

transformation. From an ecological perspective, schools operate within the mesosystem, interacting dynamically with other environments such as family and peer groups in influencing adolescent development (Bronfenbrenner, 1974). Within this framework, school smartphone policies represent institutional responses to digital challenges, reflecting both normative values and practical constraints. The implementation of such policies, whether in the form of total prohibition or regulated restriction, cannot be understood solely through policy design, but must be examined through the lens of implementation processes. Drawing on Policy Implementation Theory, particularly the model proposed by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), policy outcomes are contingent upon factors such as clarity of objectives, consistency of enforcement, availability of resources, and effectiveness of communication. These elements shape how students interpret and respond to regulations, ultimately influencing their psychological well-being and social competence (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983).

The effectiveness of school policies is not isolated from the broader ecological system. Parental mediation functions as a parallel regulatory mechanism that may reinforce or weaken school-based interventions. Alignment between school regulations and parental practices creates a coherent environment that supports adolescents' psychosocial development, whereas inconsistency may generate role conflict and psychological strain (Bronfenbrenner, 1974; Livingstone and Helsper, 2008). This interaction underscores the need to conceptualize policy effectiveness as a product of interdependent systems rather than isolated institutional actions. Consequently, contemporary policy analysis has shifted from questioning which policy is superior toward understanding under what conditions and for which populations specific policies are most effective (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1974).

Within the Indonesian context, particularly in culturally rich settings such as Bukittinggi, variations in smartphone policies across Islamic junior high schools provide a unique empirical landscape. Existing practices generally fall into two categories: total prohibition and regulated restriction. The former emphasizes clear and singular objectives of minimizing digital risks, yet may encounter resistance if not supported by consistent enforcement and parental collaboration. The latter adopts a dual-purpose approach, balancing protection with educational utilization, but requires high institutional capacity and collective commitment among educators to ensure consistent implementation. Notably, the absence of unregulated smartphone use across schools reflects a shared institutional awareness of the need to control digital exposure, highlighting the cultural and educational priorities embedded within these policies. Psychological well-being, as conceptualized by Ryff (1989), provides a multidimensional framework for understanding positive human functioning, encompassing self-acceptance, positive relations, autonomy, environmental

mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. While widely upheld, this model has been critiqued for its strong grounding in Western individualistic philosophy, which may not fully capture the relational and communal dimensions of well-being in collectivist societies (Christopher, 1999; Uchida et al., 2004; Joshanloo, 2014). Furthermore, the model has been challenged for its limited sensitivity to the complexities of digital life, where identity construction, social interaction, and environmental navigation increasingly occur within online spaces (Riva et al., 2016; Valkenburg et al., 2022). In the digital era, adolescents' well-being is shaped not only by offline experiences but also by their ability to manage digital interactions, resist harmful comparisons, and maintain balanced engagement with technology (Twenge, 2017; Clark et al., 2018).

Social competence represents a crucial developmental outcome during adolescence. Defined as the ability to achieve personal goals in social interactions while maintaining positive relationships (Rose-Krasnor, 1997), social competence encompasses communication skills, empathy, assertiveness, and interpersonal problem-solving. Operationally, this construct has been widely measured through instruments such as the School Social Behavior Scale, which categorizes social competence into cooperation, assertion, and responsibility (Merrell, 2008). In digital contexts, social competence extends beyond face-to-face interactions to include digital communication skills, ethical awareness, and the ability to navigate online relationships effectively (Büchi et al., 2018). Adolescents with strong digital social competence are better positioned to leverage technology for positive social engagement, whereas those lacking such skills may experience relational difficulties across both online and offline domains (EU Kids Online, 2020).

The development of social competence is influenced by multiple ecological layers. At the microsystem level, parenting styles and school climate play pivotal roles in shaping social behaviors, while at the mesosystem level, consistency between home and school environments reinforces social learning (Bronfenbrenner, 1974). Cultural norms within the macrosystem further define acceptable social behaviors, particularly in collectivist societies where harmony and interdependence are emphasized. Empirical evidence also suggests a strong positive association between social competence and psychological well-being, as adolescents who maintain supportive relationships tend to exhibit higher self-acceptance and life satisfaction (Ryff, 1989).

Parental mediation constitutes a key mechanism through which families regulate children's digital experiences. This concept encompasses restrictive mediation, active mediation, and co-use strategies, each representing different approaches to guiding children's engagement with digital media (Shin and Lwin, 2022). Recent studies emphasize the need for adaptive and context-

sensitive mediation strategies that evolve alongside technological advancements and children's developmental needs (Fam et al., 2025). Effective parental mediation not only mitigates the risks associated with digital exposure but also enhances adolescents' capacity to develop responsible and balanced digital habits. Integrating these perspectives, the present study adopts an ecological and interdisciplinary framework to examine the interplay between school smartphone policies, parental mediation, and adolescents' psychosocial outcomes. By situating policy analysis within a broader socio-cultural and digital context, this study seeks to provide a more nuanced understanding of how institutional and familial factors jointly shape psychological well-being and social competence. Such an approach is essential for developing evidence-based, contextually grounded educational policies that respond effectively to the complexities of adolescent life in the digital age.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a non-experimental design, specifically adopting a comparative-correlational framework to examine differences between naturally occurring groups and the relationships among variables without manipulation. A cross-sectional strategy was implemented, wherein all variables were measured at a single point in time to ensure efficiency while maintaining analytical rigor (Creswell, 2014). The independent variable was school smartphone policy, categorized into total prohibition and regulated restriction, while the dependent variables comprised psychological well-being and social competence. Parental mediation was positioned as a moderating variable, and gender, duration of smartphone use outside school, and parental socioeconomic status were included as control variables to enhance internal validity (Hair et al., 2019).

The study was conducted among students from private Islamic junior high schools in Bukittinggi, selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation of both policy types. Inclusion criteria required schools to have consistently implemented their respective policies for at least one academic year and to demonstrate sufficient student populations. Within selected schools, participants were recruited using purposive quota sampling based on exposure duration, prioritizing students with longer experience under the policy to strengthen construct validity, consistent with the principle of exposure adequacy (Kazdin, 2017) and information-rich sampling (Patton, 2015). Ethical procedures were strictly followed, including institutional approval, voluntary participation, and assurance of anonymity.

Data were collected באמצעות structured questionnaires administered in controlled classroom settings. Psychological well-being was measured using an adapted short version of Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff, 1989), while social competence was assessed through the Social Competence scale of

the School Social Behavior Scales (Merrell, 2008). Parental mediation was measured באמצעות an adapted Parental Mediation Scale capturing restrictive, active, and monitoring dimensions (Shin and Lwin, 2022). All instruments were adapted to ensure contextual relevance and age-appropriate comprehension, supported by expert judgment and pilot testing procedures. Reliability and validity were evaluated using established criteria, including Cronbach's alpha thresholds and construct validity indicators (Hair et al., 2019; Rust et al., 2020).

Data analysis proceeded in three stages: preliminary data screening, descriptive statistics, and inferential analysis. Data cleaning involved handling missing values, identifying outliers באמצעות the interquartile range method, and ensuring data integrity (Field, 2024; Kang, 2013). Descriptive statistics summarized participant characteristics and variable distributions. Inferential analyses included independent samples t-tests or Mann-Whitney tests to examine group differences, analysis of covariance to control for confounding variables, and multiple regression techniques to assess predictive relationships. Moderation and mediation effects were tested באמצעות path analysis with bootstrapping procedures to determine indirect effects and interaction terms (Westfall and Arias, 2020). Effect sizes were reported to provide substantive interpretation of findings (Cohen, 1988).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study employed three primary preparatory steps, namely instrument finalization, acquisition of research permits, and pilot testing of the data collection system. The instruments utilized included the Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, the SSBS-2, and the Parental Mediation Scale (Shin & Lwin, 2022), all of which had undergone systematic processes of adaptation, validation, and expert judgment to ensure their suitability for the target population. Research approval was obtained from the International Open University (IOU) as well as four Islamic junior high schools in Bukittinggi. A pilot test involving 30 students indicated that the instruments were comprehensible, with an average completion time ranging from 15 to 20 minutes.

In the initial data processing stage, data cleaning procedures were conducted, including the removal of duplicate responses and outliers using the Interquartile Range (IQR) method, as well as the treatment of missing values through mean replacement, given that the missing data were assumed to be random (Kang, 2013). Subsequently, the cleaned dataset was systematically stored and documented through a structured research log. The study involved 200 students drawn from four schools, with an equal distribution across policy groups. Overall, respondents were predominantly aged 14–15 years, came from middle- to upper-socioeconomic backgrounds, and reported daily smartphone use ranging from one to five hours.

Theoretical Discussion (Ryff, Bronfenbrenner)

The finding of a significant interaction between school policy (X) and parental policy (Z) on psychological well-being (Y_1) with a p -value of 0.033 strongly supports Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1974), which posits that individual development is shaped by dynamic interactions across environmental systems. These results confirm that schools do not operate in a vacuum; rather, their impact on student psychological well-being is heavily contingent upon the home rearing context. Furthermore, the revealed specificity of influence—where school policy directly affects psychological well-being but not social competence after controlling for parental policy enriches this theory by demonstrating that different environmental systems exert distinct impacts on various developmental outcomes. The significant partial mediation finding ($X \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y_2$, $p = 0.016$) adds a novel dimension by uncovering the inter-system transmission mechanism, where institutional norms and rules at school influence students' social competence through a process of adjustment and adoption by the family system.

Moreover, these results align with aspects of Ryff's Psychological Well-being Theory (1989), particularly its emphasis on internal psychological factors. The finding that demographic and socioeconomic variables were non-significant in predicting psychological well-being supports Ryff's premise that well-being is a positive psychological achievement rather than a mere product of external conditions. The autonomy dimension in Ryff's theory may explain why more structured "total ban" policies are associated with higher well-being; for adolescents still developing self-regulation, clear external boundaries can reduce anxiety and pressure in decision-making regarding digital use. However, the findings also offer a contextual critique of Ryff's model. The relatively low Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for Factor 1 (0.404) suggests that Ryff's well-being dimensions, developed in Western individualistic contexts, may not fully capture the construct of well-being within the collectivist Minangkabau culture. In this setting, dimensions such as "positive relations with others" might be more central and manifest differently than in individualistic settings.

Contextualization: Minangkabau Culture and Islamic Education

The finding that students in schools with a "total ban policy" exhibit significantly higher levels of psychological well-being (Y_1) compared to those in schools with measured restriction policies can be understood deeply through the lens of Minangkabau culture and the robust Islamic educational values in Bukittinggi. The collectivist Minangkabau culture and strong Islamic values serve as a social foundation that supports the acceptance of restrictive school policies, including total smartphone bans. Norms of social harmony and collectivist compliance bolster the positive effects of such policies on student psychological well-being (Y_1). A clear and uniform prohibition structure

reduces potential tension and competition regarding technology use within the school environment, thereby creating a more stable and supportive space for emotional development. In this context, restrictive policies are perceived not as an infringement on autonomy, but as a form of protection and preservation of established collective values.

Islamic values provide strong moral legitimacy for total ban policies, aligning with principles of self-control, discipline, and protection from negative influences. The social consensus in Bukittinggi is reflected in the fact that no private Islamic junior high schools permit free smartphone use, demonstrating a synergy between institutional policy and community norms. This legitimacy enhances student acceptance and compliance, contrasting with Western contexts where similar approaches are often deemed authoritarian. Such normative support creates a coherent and predictable environment that supports emotional stability, particularly regarding the dimensions of self-acceptance and environmental mastery within Ryff's model.

The matrilineal kinship structure of the Minangkabau, with the central role of the mother in child socialization and educational decision-making, further strengthens the link between school policy and child well-being. The high and homogeneous level of maternal education in the sample (72.5% highly educated) indicates that school-related decisions and policy acceptance are dominated by educated, critical maternal figures. This explains why maternal education was non-significant in the regression model—due to the minimal variance in education levels. The mother's strong role in aligning parenting practices with school policies creates an ecological fit that fosters consistency in the child's experience, contributing to superior psychological well-being.

Comparison with Prior Research

Consistency with Goodyear et al. (2025) - SMART Schools Study

The results of this study demonstrate significant consistency with key findings in recent literature regarding the impact of digital policies in education. First, this study aligns with Goodyear et al. (2025) in the SMART Schools Study, which concluded that smartphone ban policies in schools are associated with better mental well-being among students. This consistency is statistically confirmed by significantly higher psychological well-being scores ($\$Y_1\$$) in the total ban group (mean = 3.884) compared to the measured restriction group (mean = 3.673). This pattern suggests that despite being conducted in different socio-cultural contexts—the UK versus Indonesia—the positive impact of a digital distraction-free learning environment on adolescent mental health appears universal or at least possesses broad external validity.

In summary, the significant difference in psychological well-being is not solely explained by policy characteristics, but by the complex interaction between

structural, cultural, and religious factors. The collectivist Minangkabau context and Islamic values create a social ecosystem where restrictive policies are accepted as a means of collective safeguarding rather than autonomy restriction. The matrilineal social structure and the central role of educated mothers in parenting reinforce the alignment between school and family norms, creating a stable and coherent environment. Thus, RQ1 is answered: the difference in psychological well-being among Islamic junior high students in Bukittinggi results from a unique ecological dynamic where school policies interact synergistically with local cultural values and family parenting practices.

Discussion of RQ2: Why Do Differences in Social Competence Exist?

1. Social Competence Theory (Rose-Krasnor)

This study provides empirical support for Rose-Krasnor's Social Competence Theory (1997). The finding that students in total ban schools possess higher social competence aligns with the theory's premise that direct, unfragmented face-to-face interaction is vital for social skill development. Reducing digital distraction creates a richer space for practicing and reinforcing social competence through direct experience. Additionally, the marginal significance of parental policy in predicting social competence ($p = 0.125$) supports the central role of the family as a primary socialization agent.

2. Comparison with Prior Research

Consistency with Manurung et al. (2024) – Impact on Social Skills

The findings reinforce Manurung et al. (2024), who reported that uncontrolled smartphone use negatively impacts the social skills of elementary students. In this study, consistency is evident in the higher social competence scores ($F_{2,1}$) for total ban students (mean = 3.852) compared to their peers (mean = 3.636). This pattern supports the hypothesis that reducing screen time and digital distraction in schools creates more opportunities for deep, unfragmented face-to-face social interaction, serving as a critical foundation for mature social competence.

3. Impact of Digital Distraction Reduction

The results can be substantively explained through the mechanism of digital distraction reduction. In a total ban context, students are shielded from the constant stimulation and interruptions caused by notifications and social media. This reduction creates greater attentional capacity for students to engage fully in social interactions. Without smartphones, students are encouraged to develop direct social skills such as verbal communication, perspective-taking, and interpersonal conflict resolution. This environment effectively "forces" students to hone their social competence naturally and continuously.

4. Implications for Social Skill Development

School environments free from digital distraction function as a critical social training ground during early adolescence. Implications suggest that schools should consider "gadget-free zones" not just as disciplinary measures, but as structured social development interventions. Furthermore, the findings highlight that developing social skills in the digital era requires a simultaneous protective and prospective approach—minimizing distraction while actively designing collaborative learning activities. Thus, RQ2 is answered: in the context of collectivist culture and Islamic education, restrictive approaches serve as a catalyst for adolescent socio-emotional development.

Discussion of RQ3: How Does Parental Policy Moderate the Relationship between X and \$Y_1\$?

1. Parental Mediation Theory (Shin & Lwin, 2022)

This research provides strong empirical validation for Parental Mediation Theory (Shin & Lwin, 2022) by revealing that parental policy serves as a significant mediator. It identifies two supporting mechanisms: a spillover effect reflected in the strong negative correlation between school and parental policies, and a conditional interaction where the school's influence on psychological well-being depends on the level of parental supervision. This supports an ecological perspective emphasizing systemic alignment in digital technology management.

2. Concept of Ecological Fit

The moderating role of parental policy (\$Z\$) can be understood through the lens of ecological fit. High alignment between school smartphone rules and home digital parenting practices creates ecological consistency, providing clarity and a sense of security for adolescents. Conversely, ecological misfit creates role strain and cognitive load, as students must constantly adjust to differing norms in their two primary environments.

3. Implications for School–Family Coordination

The significant moderating role of parental policy implies that school policy effectiveness cannot be optimized without family alignment. Schools must proactively engage parents as strategic partners through joint policy forums and structured parenting classes. This encourages a paradigm shift toward an ecological co-regulation model, where schools and families jointly establish core principles and boundaries. Thus, RQ3 is answered: school policy effectiveness depends on alignment with home digital parenting practices through consistent restrictive mediation.

Discussion of RQ4: Why Is There No Moderation on Social Competence, but Mediation Exists?

1. Distinct Mechanisms between \$Y_1\$ and \$Y_2\$

The study reveals distinct mechanistic patterns: for \$Y_1\$, parental policy acts as a moderator, whereas for \$Y_2\$, it acts as a mediator. Psychological well-being, being intrapsychic, is directly influenced by the coherence of daily environment norms. Social competence, however, is behavioral and requires practice. Restrictive school policies do not immediately increase social competence; instead, they encourage parents to adopt structured parenting, which then creates more opportunities for children to develop social skills outside of school.

2. Role of Parental Policy as a Mediator

The mediation analysis reveals an indirect effect pathway. School norms regarding smartphone use communicate social values to parents, who then adopt and translate these into structured household rules (normative-transmissive path). Additionally, mothers in the matrilineal Minangkabau context actively adjust parenting strategies in response to legitimate school policies (responsive-adaptive path).

3. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretical: This enriches Bronfenbrenner's framework by showing that inter-system relationships can be both interactive (moderation) and transmissive (mediation) depending on the developmental outcome.

Practical: It provides an operational guide for stakeholders; restrictive policies are insufficient on their own—schools must actively involve parents in building norm consistency.

Thus, RQ4 is answered: parental policy serves as a mediator—not a moderator—in the relationship between school policy and student social competence (\$Y_2\$). Influences are transmitted through changes in home digital parenting, creating a consistent environment for practicing direct social skills. Interventions must therefore be integrated and ecosystemic, placing school-family collaboration at the core of socio-emotional development strategies.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that school smartphone policies have a significant impact on the psychological well-being and social competence of Islamic junior high school students in Bukittinggi. The main findings indicate that students in schools implementing a total ban policy exhibit higher levels of psychological well-being and social competence compared to those in schools applying a

restrictive-use policy; therefore, the initial hypotheses (H1 and H2) are not supported. Furthermore, parental policy plays a crucial role, functioning as a moderator in the relationship between school policy and psychological well-being (supporting H3), and as a mediator in the relationship with social competence (rejecting H4 and yielding a novel finding). The practical implications of this study highlight the importance of synergy among schools, parents, and teachers in managing smartphone use effectively. Schools are encouraged to develop contextual and collaborative policies, parents to adopt balanced digital parenting practices, and teachers to integrate adaptive instructional approaches that address digital challenges. Overall, this study provides both theoretical and empirical contributions to understanding educational policy dynamics in the digital era and offers a foundation for developing policies oriented toward students' well-being.

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