The Relationship between Social Media Use and Decline in Qur'an Recitation Duration among Senior High School Students

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https://doi.org/10.17977/um065.v6.i7.2026.15

Article history
Submitted: 22 May 2026
Revised: 23 July 2026
Accepted: 25 July 2026
Published: 26 July 2026

Keywords
Correlational study
Qur'an recitation duration
Senior high school students
Social media use

Abstract
The rapid growth of digital technology and social media has changed the way adolescents communicate, learn, and seek entertainment. Excessive use of social media is feared to reduce time devoted to worship, particularly reading the Qur'an. Purpose: This study aims to examine the relationship between social media use and the decline in Qur'an recitation duration among senior high school students. Method: A quantitative correlational design was employed, involving 330 students (grades X-XII; 152 male, 178 female; age 15-18 years) selected through simple random sampling from a public senior high school in Indonesia. Data were collected using validity- and reliability-tested questionnaires and analyzed with Pearson product-moment correlation and simple linear regression. Result: Social media use among students was relatively high (M = 72.5, SD = 8.4), while Qur'an recitation duration showed a comparatively greater decline and variability (M = 58.2, SD = 10.1). A strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation was found between social media use and the decline in recitation duration ($r = 0.648$, $R^2 = 0.420$, $p < .001$), indicating that social media use accounted for approximately 42% of the variance in the decline of recitation duration, while the remaining 58% was explained by other, unmeasured factors. Conclusion: There is a strong and statistically significant relationship between social media use and the decline in Qur'an recitation duration among senior high school students. These findings underscore the importance of balanced digital media use to support consistent religious practice among adolescents.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of digital technology, particularly social media, has changed many aspects of daily life, including how people communicate, learn, and spend their leisure time (Alves Ferreira et al., 2026). Adolescents are among the most active users of social media, spending a considerable amount of time each day on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp for entertainment, communication, and information seeking (Al-Ansi et al., 2023). Because of this intensity of use, social media has become an inseparable part of adolescents' daily routines (Muralidharan et al., 2023). This growth has fueled an active scholarly debate: while some narrative and systematic reviews report only small, inconsistent associations between digital technology use and adolescent wellbeing (Orben, 2020; Odgers & Jensen, 2020), the sheer scale of adoption illustrated by rising rates of problematic smartphone use worldwide (Olson et al., 2022) and validated through widely used measurement instruments such as the Smartphone Addiction Scale (Kwon et al., 2013) means that even small effects can carry meaningful cumulative consequences for daily routines, including religious practice.

This high level of engagement raises concern because time is a finite resource: the more time adolescents allocate to social media, the less time may remain for other activities, including religious practice (Alves Ferreira et al., 2026). Part of this pull can be explained by psychological mechanisms such as fear of missing out, which has been shown to drive more frequent and intense social media engagement among adolescents (Beyens et al., 2016), and by broader patterns in which digital media use affects different groups of adolescents in different ways (Twenge & Martin, 2020). One activity that is particularly vulnerable to this time-displacement effect is reading the Qur'an (recitation), a core devotional practice in Muslim daily life. Several studies suggest that students who use social media intensively often struggle to manage their time, resulting in reduced engagement in worship activities (Grigore & Cobzeanu, 2025; Muralidharan et al., 2023).

Empirical findings on this relationship, however, are not entirely consistent. Some studies report that heavy social media use is associated with reduced religious engagement among adolescents, identifying digital technology as both a risk and a protective factor for religious identity depending on how it is used (Alves Ferreira et al., 2026), while others find that social media can positively support religious life when used appropriately

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for example, as a medium for da'wah (Islamic outreach) that makes religious content more accessible (Zaid et al., 2022; Grigore & Cobzeanu, 2025). A broader systematic review of social media's role in religious life similarly concludes that digital platforms have reshaped religious communication and social change in ways that can be either disruptive or facilitative, depending on context (Hajdini & Iaia, 2024). Cross-cultural evidence points in a similar direction: a study of adolescent social media users in a Muslim-majority context found that perceived religiosity outcomes varied depending on the type and purpose of use rather than the amount of use alone (Almenayes, 2015), a pattern echoed in research on the changing religious landscape of Bangkok, where social media has become an increasingly influential medium for religious practice rather than a purely displacing force (Agarwal & Jones, 2022). Meanwhile, a longitudinal study of adolescents' social media use trajectories found that its consequences depend heavily on individual and contextual factors such as self-regulation and social support (Salerno et al., 2025). This body of research suggests that the relationship between social media use and religious practice is not uniform, but shaped by how, not just how much, social media is used (Grigore & Cobzeanu, 2025).

This relationship also needs to be understood against the backdrop of a wider literature on religiosity and adolescent wellbeing. A large meta-analytic review found that higher spirituality and religiosity are generally associated with more favorable psychological outcomes among adolescents and emerging adults, including greater well-being and self-esteem (Yonker et al., 2012), which strengthens the rationale for treating a decline in religious practice, such as reduced Qur'an recitation, as a developmentally meaningful outcome rather than a purely devotional concern. At the same time, measuring religious practice validly within a Muslim population requires instruments sensitive to Islamic religious life rather than generic or Western-normed scales; validated approaches to measuring religious practice among Muslim populations (Aman et al., 2019; Mahudin et al., 2016) informed the way religious practice was conceptualized and operationalized in the present study.

Despite this growing body of research, most existing studies either focus on religiosity in general terms or on university-age and adult populations, with comparatively little quantitative evidence on senior high school students a developmental stage in which habit formation around both technology use and religious practice is still taking shape. In addition, few studies specifically examine Qur'an recitation duration as a measurable outcome, as opposed to broader and more subjective measures of “religiosity.” This represents a gap that the present study seeks to address by focusing on a concrete, measurable behavioral indicator (recitation duration) among a clearly defined adolescent population.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the relationship between social media use and the decline in Qur'an recitation duration among senior high school students, and to determine the magnitude of the contribution of social media use to this decline. Theoretically, the findings are expected to enrich the literature on the relationship between digital technology use and adolescents' religious behavior. Practically, the results are intended to inform teachers, parents, and school communities in guiding balanced social media use among students so that it does not come at the expense of religious practice.

This study is guided by the general proposition that more intensive social media use is associated with a greater decline in Qur'an recitation duration, while recognizing that this relationship may vary depending on how social media is used. It is hoped that the results will provide clearer empirical evidence on this relationship and serve as a reference for future research and practice in adolescent religious education amid the ongoing expansion of digital media.

2. Method

This study used a quantitative method with a correlational design to determine the relationship between social media use and the decline in Qur'an recitation duration among senior high school students. The population comprised all students of a public senior high school in Indonesia (identity withheld to preserve anonymity in the review process), totaling 1,038 students. A sample of 330 students was selected using simple random sampling: a numbered sampling frame of all eligible students was constructed from school administrative records, and 330 students were drawn using a random-number procedure so that every student had an equal and independent probability of selection. The final sample consisted of students in grades X-XII, comprising 152 male students (46.1%) and 178 female students (53.9%), aged between 15 and 18 years (M = 16.4 years).

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire covering the frequency and duration of students' social media use, as well as the frequency and duration of their Qur'an recitation. Responses were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation and simple linear regression to determine the relationship and the magnitude of contribution between the two variables.

2.1. Research Instrument

The research instrument was a closed-ended questionnaire developed based on established theoretical constructs. For the social media use variable, the instrument referred to Junco (2012), who conceptualizes social

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media use along the dimensions of frequency, duration, and type of activity performed. For the Qur'an recitation duration variable, the instrument drew on established religious-practice measurement approaches in the digital-era literature, which frame religious observance as a habitual practice measurable in terms of frequency (how often) and duration (how long) (Muralidharan et al., 2023), and was further informed by validated approaches to measuring religious practice specifically within Muslim populations (Aman et al., 2019; Mahudin et al., 2016). Responses were recorded on a five-point scale (never, rarely, sometimes, often, very often).

2.2. Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Instrument validity was established through expert judgment involving 2-3 content experts, followed by a try-out administered to 30 students outside the research sample. An item was considered valid if its calculated r-value exceeded the critical r-table value at a 5% significance level. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with a threshold of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ indicating acceptable internal consistency. Both the social media use and recitation duration scales met these validity and reliability criteria and were therefore considered suitable for use in the main study.

2.3. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection began with obtaining formal permission from the school. The questionnaire was then administered directly to the 330 sampled students, who completed items on their social media use and Qur'an recitation duration. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness before being scored and entered for statistical analysis.

Data analysis used Pearson's product-moment correlation formula, where r is the correlation coefficient, N is the sample size, X is the social media use score, and Y is the score for decline in Qur'an recitation duration. The calculated r-value was compared with the critical r-table value at a 5% significance level to determine whether the relationship between the two variables was statistically significant.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Social Media Use

The results show that the level of social media use among students was relatively high (M = 72.5, SD = 8.4). The comparatively small standard deviation indicates that students' responses were fairly homogeneous, suggesting that most students share a similar pattern of frequent social media use for entertainment, communication, and information seeking.

3.1.2. Qur'an Recitation Duration

For the Qur'an recitation duration variable, the mean score was 58.2 (SD = 10.1). The larger standard deviation relative to the social media use variable indicates greater variability in students' recitation habits: some students maintained a regular recitation routine, while others recited far less often, a pattern plausibly linked to differing amounts of time spent on social media.

The data further show that higher social media use tends to coincide with a lower tendency to read the Qur'an regularly, and this pattern was consistent despite individual variation. This is consistent with a time-displacement explanation: because social media offers highly engaging content (entertainment, short videos, and interactive communication), it competes for time that might otherwise be allocated to recitation.

3.1.3. Decline in the Intensity of Qur'an Recitation

For the decline in recitation intensity variable, the mean score was 65.7 (SD = 9.3), indicating that, on average, students experienced a moderate decline in recitation time, plausibly related to their social media activity. The moderate standard deviation suggests that while the extent of decline varied across students, most scores remained reasonably close to the mean.

To determine the strength, direction, and statistical significance of the relationship between the two variables, a simple linear regression and Pearson correlation analysis were conducted, with the results summarized in the Model Summary (Table 1), the ANOVA significance test (Table 2), and the correlation test (Table 1).

Table 1. Model Summary of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.648	0.420	0.418	7.215

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As shown in Table 1, an R-value of 0.648 was obtained, indicating a strong relationship between social media use and the decline in Qur'an recitation duration. The R Square value of 0.420 indicates that social media use contributes approximately 42.0% to the variance in the decline of recitation duration, while the remaining 58.0% is explained by other factors not examined in this study, such as peer environment, study habits, level of religious education, and family conditions. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.418, being close to the R Square value, indicates that the regression model is reasonably stable and generalizable for this sample.

As presented in Table 2, the ANOVA test yielded F = 239.287 with a significance value of p = 0.000 (p < 0.05), indicating that the regression model is statistically significant. This confirms that social media use, as a predictor, is meaningfully associated with variation in the decline of Qur'an recitation duration among the sampled students.

Table 2. ANOVA Results for the Regression Model

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	12456.321	1	12456.321	239.287	0.000[b]
Residual	17073.458	328	52.053		
Total	29529.779	329			

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Decline in Qur'an Recitation Duration; b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Use.

Table 3 presents the results of the correlation and hypothesis test between the two variables. As shown in Table 3, the Pearson correlation coefficient between social media use and the decline in Qur'an recitation duration was r = 0.648 (p = 0.000, two-tailed), which falls within the "strong" category of relationship strength. Using the r-table value for N = 330 at α = 0.05 (r-table ≈ 0.108), the calculated r exceeds the critical value (0.648 > 0.108); accordingly, H0 is rejected and Ha is accepted. This indicates a statistically significant relationship between social media use and the decline in Qur'an recitation duration among the sampled students, and that this relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Table 3. Correlation between Social Media Use and Decline in Qur'an Recitation Duration

		Social Media Use	Decrease in Qur'an Recitation Duration
Social Media Use	Pearson Correlation	1	0.648**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	330	330
Decrease in Qur'an Recitation Duration	Pearson Correlation	0.648**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	330	330

3.2. Discussion

The results indicate a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between social media use and the decline in Qur'an recitation duration among senior high school students (r = 0.648; R^2 = 0.420; p = 0.000). This finding is consistent with a time-displacement perspective, which holds that because time is a finite resource, increased engagement in one activity (social media use) necessarily reduces the time available for competing activities, including religious practice (McClure, 2023). Social media platforms are specifically designed to sustain user attention through continuous, personalized, and highly engaging content, which can make it difficult for adolescents to voluntarily disengage in favor of less immediately rewarding activities such as recitation (Almenayes, 2015).

This finding aligns with broader evidence that social media platforms function as highly attention-capturing media, offering entertainment, information, and social interaction that are accessible with minimal effort, and that social media influencers and entertainment-oriented content can substantially reshape adolescents' daily behavior and time allocation, sometimes at the expense of other routine activities (Al-Ansi et al., 2023). This can be partly understood through a basic-needs perspective: social media engagement can both satisfy and frustrate adolescents' fundamental psychological needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy, making it a highly compelling and sometimes compulsive activity that competes with less immediately rewarding routines such as recitation (West et al., 2024). Because social media is also an increasingly central context for identity exploration during adolescence (Avci et al., 2025), time spent on these platforms may be experienced as developmentally important in its own right, further intensifying the competition for time with religious practice. When adolescents allocate substantial time to these features, other routine activities—including learning and worship are correspondingly deprioritized. It is also consistent with the view that daily

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environment and habituation strongly shape adolescents' religious behavior (Muralidharan et al., 2023): without deliberate structuring of time, informal digital habits can gradually displace formal religious routines rather than complementing them.

At the same time, the R^2 value of 0.420 indicates that while social media use is an important correlate, it explains less than half of the variance in recitation decline; the remaining 58% is attributable to other, unmeasured factors. This is consistent with longitudinal evidence showing that the behavioral consequences of adolescents' social media use are not uniform but are moderated by individual factors such as self-regulation, social support, and parental supervision (Salerno et al., 2025), and with evidence that the dynamics between smartphone use and adolescent wellbeing tend to be positive but short-lived, or ephemeral, rather than fixed and uniform (Marciano et al., 2022). A recent meta-analysis further confirms that self-control is a robust and consistent protective factor against problematic social media use across studies and cultural contexts (Şimşir-Gökalp & Akyürek, 2024), suggesting that individual differences in self-regulation likely explain part of the unexplained variance in the present study. This context-dependence is echoed broadly in the digital-wellbeing literature: reviews of social networking sites and mental health emphasize that the quality, rather than only the frequency, of online interactions shapes outcomes such as depression and anxiety (Seabrook et al., 2016), and editorials on adolescent social media use likewise stress that effects are neither uniformly harmful nor uniformly beneficial (Guo & Cheung, 2023; Dienlin & Johannes, 2020). Similarly, aspects of self-presentation and social comparison on social media have been linked to lower wellbeing among early adolescents in other cultural contexts (Aryal et al., 2025), reinforcing that how social media is used matters more than how much. It also echoes findings from religiosity-focused studies suggesting that outcomes depend more on the purpose and manner of social media use than on usage volume alone (Grigore & Cobzeanu, 2025). This suggests that the relationship documented here should be interpreted as one contributing factor among several, rather than as the sole determinant of adolescents' recitation habits.

It is also important to note that, because this study used a cross-sectional correlational design rather than an experimental or longitudinal design, the relationship identified should be interpreted as an association and a statistical contribution rather than as evidence of a strict causal effect. The direction and mechanism of this relationship—whether heavy social media use directly displaces recitation time, whether students who are already less engaged in worship are more inclined toward heavy social media use, or whether both are jointly influenced by a third factor such as family religious climate cannot be disentangled with the present data and would benefit from longitudinal or experimental follow-up (McClure, 2023).

These findings nonetheless carry practical relevance. Because social media use is shown to meaningfully correlate with reduced recitation time, deliberate time-management strategies both self-directed and supported by parents and teachers appear necessary to help students maintain a healthy balance between digital engagement and religious practice (Alves Ferreira et al., 2026). Evidence from Indonesian families suggests that parents already draw on a range of restrictive and enabling mediation strategies to help adolescents use social media adaptively, including monitoring, technical controls, and open discussion of appropriate use (Purboningsih et al., 2025); similar strategies could be deliberately extended to protect time for religious practice. Rather than framing social media solely as a threat, schools and families may also consider leveraging it constructively, for instance through digital da'wah content or reminders that encourage recitation, consistent with evidence that appropriately directed social media use can support rather than undermine religious engagement (Zaid et al., 2022; Hajdini & Iaia, 2024).

3.3. Practical Implications

These findings suggest that helping students manage social media use wisely, without allowing it to displace time for Qur'an recitation, is an important practical concern. Achieving this balance is likely to require coordinated efforts among students themselves, parents, teachers, and the broader school environment, so that engagement in the digital world does not come at the expense of adolescents' religious practice.

3.4. Limitations and Future Research

This study is limited by its cross-sectional correlational design, which restricts causal interpretation, and by its focus on a single school, which limits generalizability. Future research is encouraged to incorporate additional variables such as religious motivation, parental supervision, and peer environment; to adopt longitudinal or mixed-method designs capable of explaining not only whether but also why recitation time changes; to extend the investigation across different educational levels (junior high school, senior high school, and university); and to examine the potentially protective or beneficial role of social media, such as its use for digital da'wah content and Qur'an-learning mobile applications a rapidly growing area of educational technology in its own right (Isa et al., 2023) which prior research suggests can positively support religious engagement when used purposefully (Almenayes, 2015; Zaid et al., 2022).

4. Conclusion

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Based on data collected from 330 senior high school students, this study found a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between social media use and the decline in Qur'an recitation duration ($r = 0.648$; $R^2 = 0.420$; $p = 0.000$), such that social media use accounted for approximately 42% of the variance in recitation decline, while the remaining 58% was attributable to other factors not examined in this study, such as family environment, peer influence, and students' personal religious motivation; taken together, these findings directly address the study's purpose by showing that higher social media use among senior high school students is associated with a greater decline in Qur'an recitation duration, underscoring the need for balanced, well-managed social media use supported by students, parents, and teachers alike to help sustain consistent religious practice amid continuing digital-technology development.

Author Contributions

All authors contributed equally to this paper. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

No funding support was received.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/ or publication of this article.

Data Availability

The datasets generated during and/ or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Declaration on AI Use

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

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ISSN: 2797-3174

(Lecture Notes in Information Systems and Organisation, Vol. 72, pp. 267–293). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-75586-6_15

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