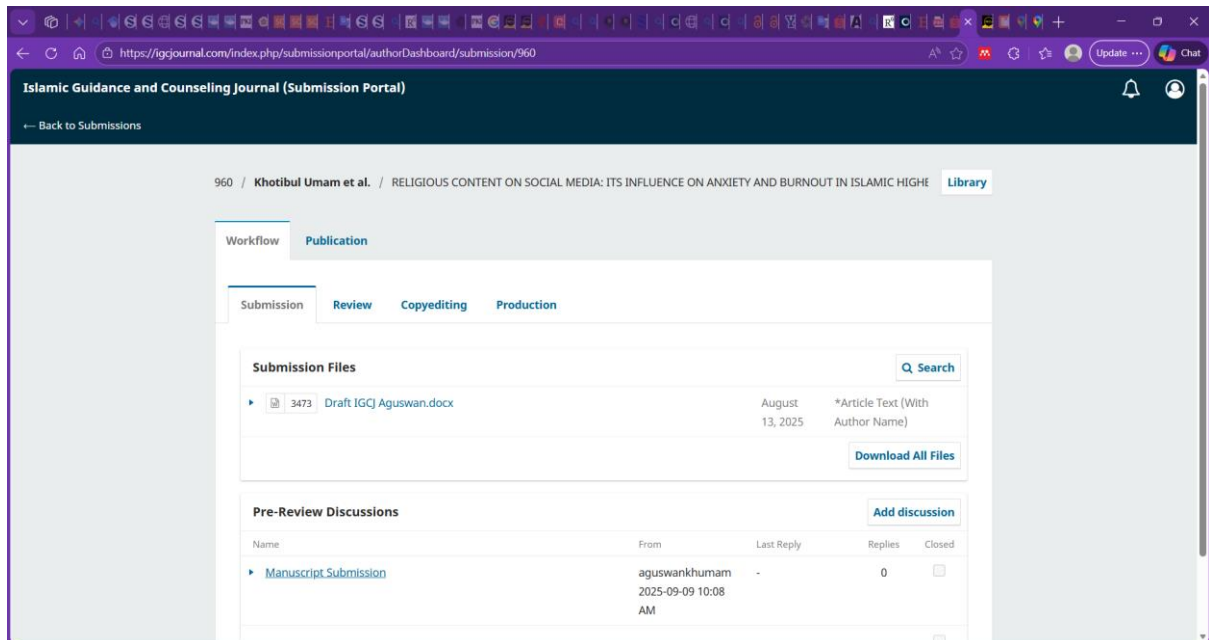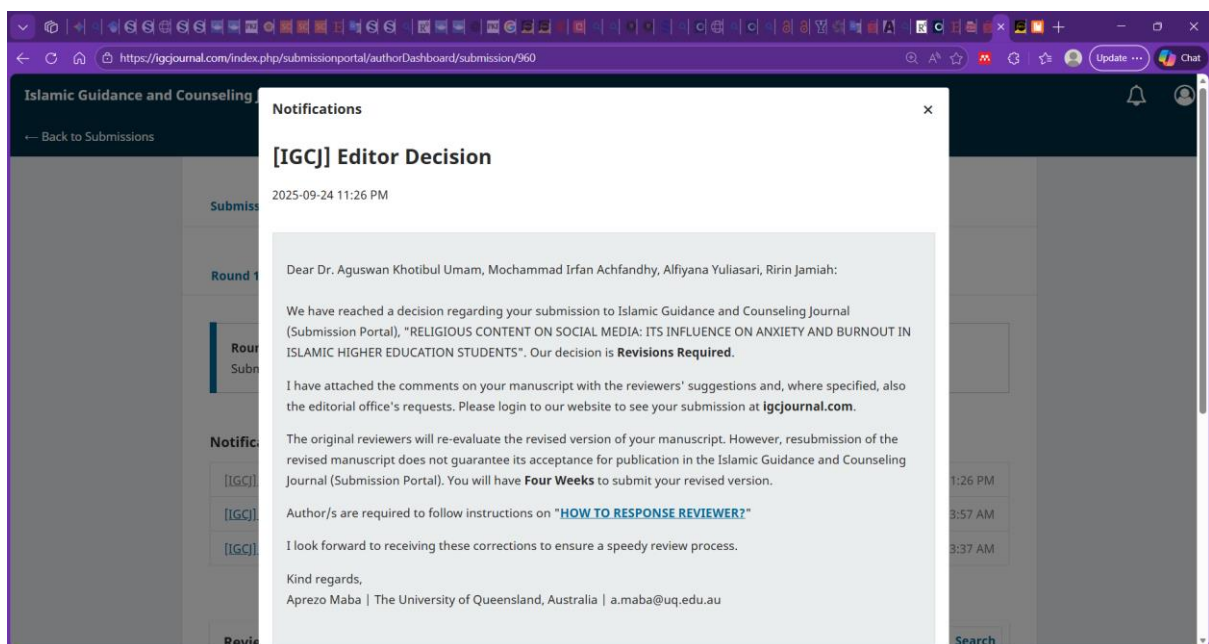# BUKTI KORESPONDENSI DENGAN JURNAL ISLAMIC GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING JOURNAL (IGCJ)
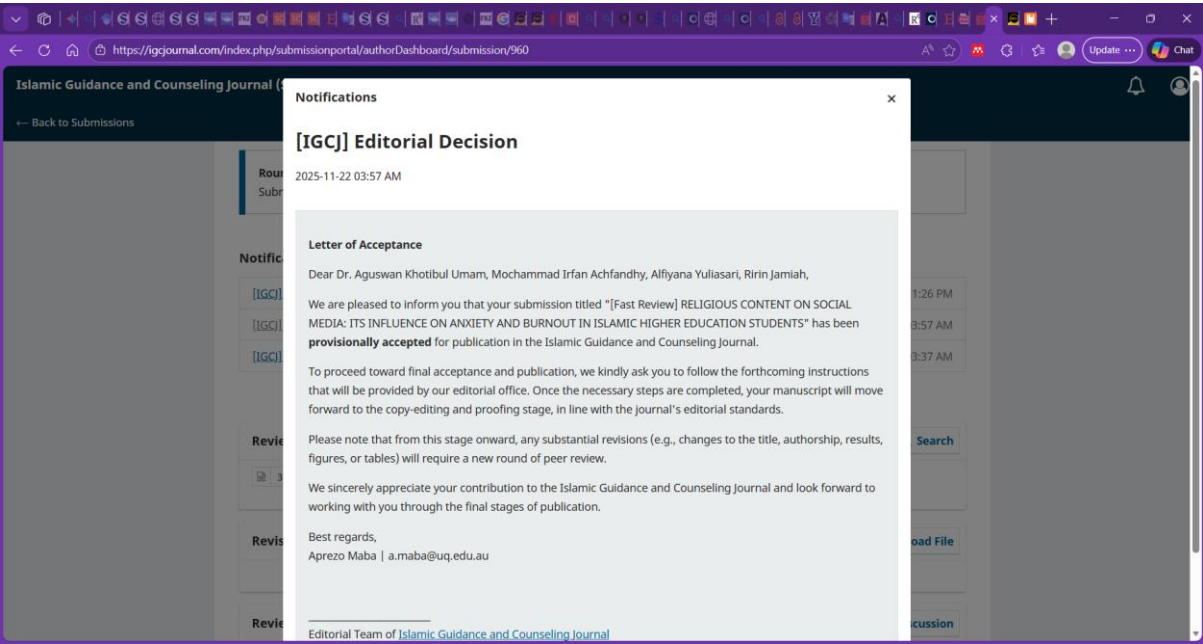
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[IGCJ] Editorial Decision

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Letter of Acceptance

Dear Dr. Aguswan Khotibul Umam, Mochammad Irfan Achfandhy, Alfiyana Yuliasari, Ririn Jamiah,

We are pleased to inform you that your submission titled "[Fast Review] RELIGIOUS CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA: ITS INFLUENCE ON ANXIETY AND BURNOUT IN ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS" has been **provisionally accepted** for publication in the Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal.

To proceed toward final acceptance and publication, we kindly ask you to follow the forthcoming instructions that will be provided by our editorial office. Once the necessary steps are completed, your manuscript will move forward to the copy-editing and proofing stage, in line with the journal's editorial standards.

Please note that from this stage onward, any substantial revisions (e.g., changes to the title, authorship, results, figures, or tables) will require a new round of peer review.

We sincerely appreciate your contribution to the Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal and look forward to working with you through the final stages of publication.

Best regards,
Aprezo Maba | a.maba@uq.edu.au

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Editorial Team of Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal

Re-submit for Copyediting dan Proofreading (04-12 Desember 2025)
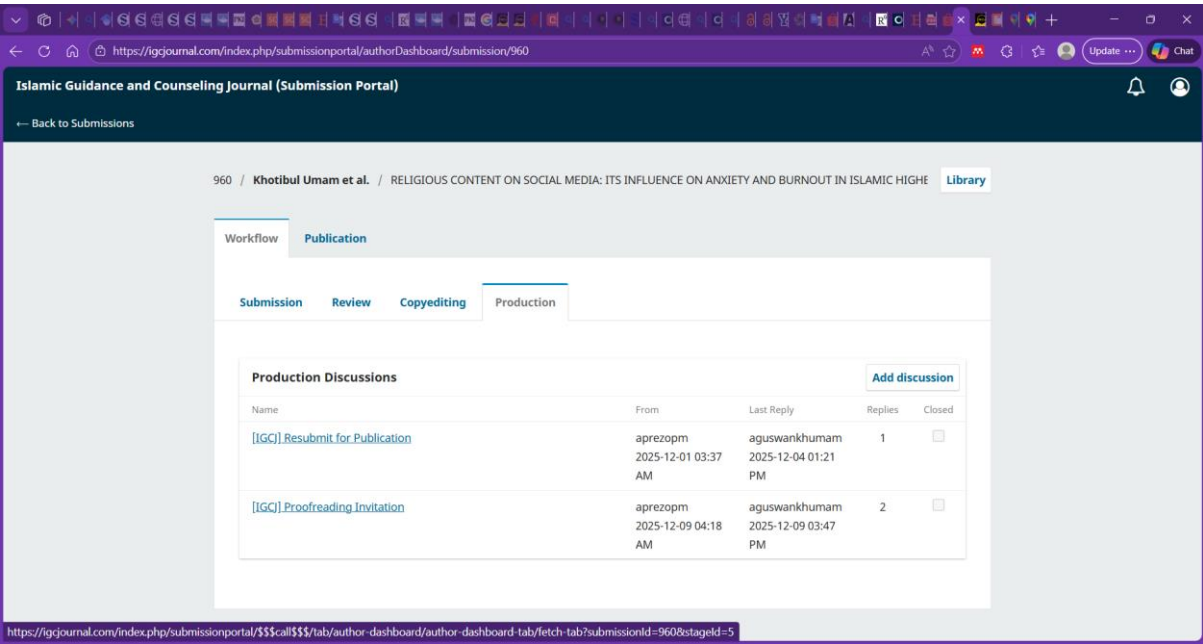
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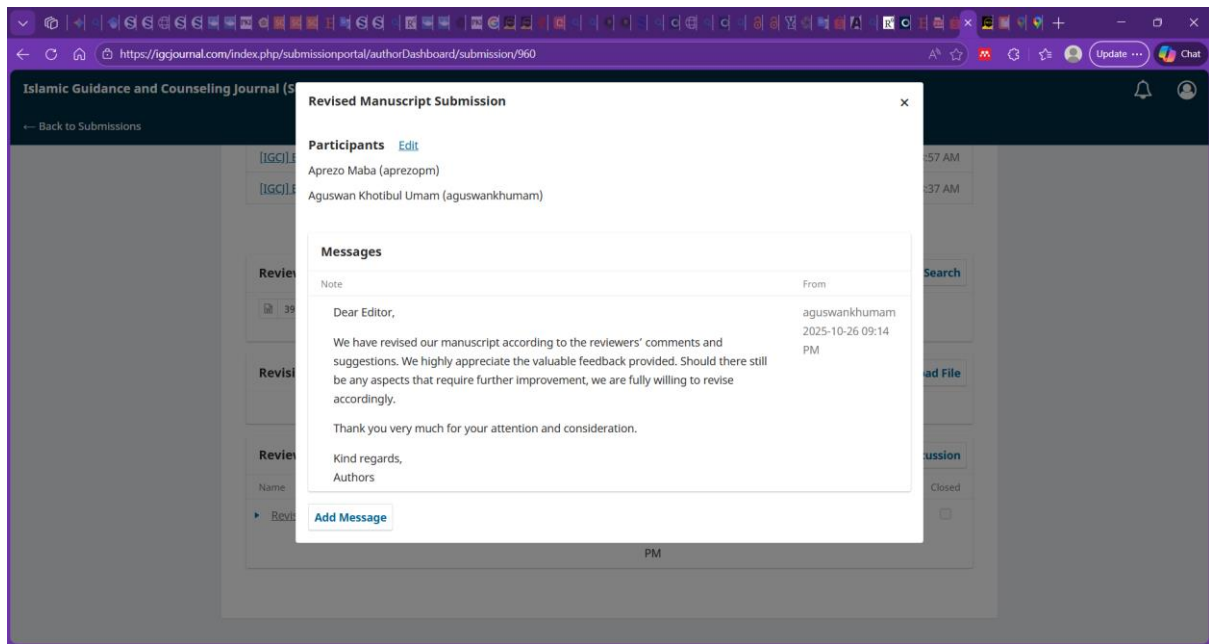
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RELIGIOUS CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA: ITS INFLUENCE ON ANXIETY AND BURNOUT IN ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

ABSTRACT

Background of the Study: Religion significantly supports and enhances mental well-being, particularly among adolescents. However, the rise of social media has introduced diverse content with varying purposes and characteristics, which may impact audience mental health. Include one sentence about the 'research gap',

Aims and Scope of Paper: This study analyzes the relationship between various types of religious content on social media and levels of anxiety and burnout among students of Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) in Lampung, Indonesia.

Methods: A quantitative survey was conducted with 1,098 students, selected via purposive sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire assessing exposure to religious content, including compassion and tranquility, educational, inspirational and motivational, fear- and punishment-oriented, and ritual and worship content, alongside validated instruments: the Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) and Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey (MBI-SS), with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.91 and 0.86, respectively. Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the relationship between content exposure and psychological outcomes.

Result: Overall exposure to religious content significantly influenced anxiety ($p = 0.009$). Inspirational and motivational content ($p = 0.020$) and fear- and punishment-oriented content ($p = 0.028$) significantly reduced anxiety, while excessive exposure to compassion and tranquility content increased anxiety ($p = 0.027$). For burnout, overall exposure was not statistically significant ($p = 0.381$), though inspirational content showed a potential to reduce burnout symptoms ($p = 0.057$).

Conclusion: This study demonstrates the complex influence of religious content on social media on anxiety and burnout among PTKI students in Lampung. Carefully designed digital religious content can support students' psychological well-being.

Keywords*: Religious Content, Social Media, Anxiety, Burnout*

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, social media has become an integral part of daily life, particularly among university students who actively engage with online platforms (Aduba & Mayowa-

Adebara, 2022). Religious content—such as faith-based motivational messages, invitations to perform worship, and narratives emphasizing fear of sin or divine punishment—represents a type of content they frequently encountered (Abusharif, 2023). Exposure to such content not only shapes individuals' religious perspectives but may also influence psychological well-being, including levels of anxiety and burnout (Liu & Ma, 2020). University students, as a demographic navigating academic pressures, social demands, and personal expectations, often seek emotional support through online content, including that of a religious nature. Nevertheless, the psychological implications of religious content remain a complex subject that warrants further in-depth investigation.

Previous research has demonstrated that religious content exerts a dual effect on psychological well-being. Numerous studies have highlighted the positive association between religiosity and mental health, framing religion as a valuable psychological resource (Vaingankar et al., 2021). Individuals experiencing symptoms of mental disorders often exhibit strong motivation to seek religious teachings as a means of facilitating recovery (Park, J. I., Hong, J. P., Park, S., & Cho, 2012). Religious practices are perceived as social institutions with multifaceted relationships to norms, ethics, lifestyle, and religious coping strategies, all aimed at enhancing the mental well-being of adherents through activities such as Qur'anic recitation and ruqyah, ritual prayers, meditation, religious counseling, and other spiritual practices (Davis & Epkins, 2008; Lang et al., 2020; Mans et al., 2021; Newman et al., 2023). However, most of these studies have predominantly examined offline contexts or traditional religious communities, rather than the exposure to religious content through social media, which presents distinct dynamics.

Although a number of studies have suggested that religious content may have a positive impact on psychological well-being, much of the existing research has focused on the general use of social media or on traditional religious communities. In reality, exposure to religious content via social media involves different patterns of interaction and distribution, largely due to the algorithm-driven nature of digital platforms (Sierocki, 2024). As Hajrvard (2016) notes, the accessibility of media has contributed to the transformation of traditional religious activities, particularly in shaping user behavior. Furthermore, prior studies have seldom systematically differentiated between various types of religious content—such as spiritual motivation, calls to worship, and narratives invoking fear or moral threat—each of which carries distinct characteristics, communicative intentions, and potential psychological effects. Moreover, each social media platform operates under its own unique logic and algorithm, determining the visibility and reach of content, thereby creating a digital religious experience that is far from uniform across users (Krüger, 2018; Luik et al., 2025; Munaro et al., 2020).

By re-examining the effects of different types of religious content on burnout and anxiety among university students, this study seeks to highlight that religious content does not invariably exert a positive influence on mental health. As Sierocki et al. (2024) have argued, certain forms of radical religious content may, in fact, exacerbate mental distress and hinder efforts to promote mental health. Therefore, the present research aims to evaluate more specifically how various types of religious content—such as spiritual motivation, calls to worship, or narratives invoking fear and moral threats—are correlated with levels of anxiety and burnout among students. The primary objective of this study is to identify the relationships between variations in religious content on social media and students' levels of anxiety and burnout, thereby offering a more holistic understanding of the implications of digital religiosity for the mental health of younger generations.

Literature Review

Religious Content in The Digital Space

Digital media has created an expansive space for the expression of diverse forms of religious content. Educational materials—such as online sermons, scriptural readings, and explanations of religious teachings—are now readily accessible across various platforms (Blondheim, 2022; Hess, 2019). Alongside these developments, virtual religious communities have emerged through live-streamed worship services, discussion forums, and interactive Q&A groups, facilitating religious engagement that transcends geographical boundaries (Gelfgren, 2024). Individuals also express their religiosity in more personal ways through social media posts, spiritual blogs, and reflective writings (Wilkins-Laflamme, 2022). In times of global crises, such as pandemics or conflicts, digital media serves as a platform for articulating spiritual values that foster a sense of meaning and solidarity. (Bisht & Parihar, 2023; Tabti, 2022). Such content often goes viral, contributing to the formation of new forms of digital folklore (Koval-Fuchylo & Orszulak-Dudkowska, 2023).

Nevertheless, not all religious practices in offline and online spaces have a positive impact on psychological well-being. One area of concern is the negative portrayal of religion. Stroope, Walker, dan Franzen have shown that individuals with low levels of both public and private religiosity tend to experience a decline in mental health when exposed to media that depicts religion negatively (Stroope et al., 2017). Moreover, individualistic forms of religious expression—such as reading sacred texts or praying in solitude—may be associated with poorer mental health outcomes compared to collective practices like participating in communal worship (Acevedo, 2010). This suggests that fragmented religiosity with limited social interaction can exacerbate feelings of alienation. Within the context of digital culture, which emphasizes performativity and visual representation, religious expression risks losing its communal function and may instead reinforce psychological isolation, particularly for individuals in vulnerable circumstances.

Furthermore, religious content that promotes homonegative values can have severe consequences, especially for LGBTQ+ individuals with religious backgrounds. Research by Sowe, Brown, dan Taylor found that exposure to religious messages rejecting certain sexual orientations increases internalized homonegativity, thereby exacerbating psychological conditions such as stress and depression (Sowe et al., 2014). In addition, religiously motivated hate speech on social media frequently becomes a source of cyberbullying, which contributes to heightened anxiety, low self-esteem, and even suicidal risk among targeted groups (Ibrahim, 2022). Therefore, it is crucial to investigate variations in religious content within digital spaces that are linked to the mental health of audiences, particularly psychologically vulnerable groups who are active users of social media.

Anxiety and Burnout in Adolescents

A substantial body of research has documented problematic associations between social media use and symptoms of depression and anxiety among adolescents—a recurring consensus emerging from both systematic reviews and recent empirical studies. Scholars argue that the adverse effects are not solely attributable to usage duration, but are mediated by mechanisms such as social comparison, fear of missing out (FOMO), cyberbullying, and sleep disruption. Longitudinal and cross-sectional evidence supports the role of these mechanisms in increasing the risk of anxiety and psychological burnout among adolescents and university students (Lahti et al., 2024; Saleem et al., 2024; Taddi et al., 2024; Yue & Rich, 2023). Moreover, chronic exposure to threats and negative content on digital platforms further amplifies emotional strain, contributing to what some have termed "social media

burnout," which, in addition to impairing mental health, disrupts academic performance and sleep, thereby producing multifaceted and context-dependent effects (Walburg et al., 2016).

Conversely, there is consensus that social media is not solely a source of risk; platforms can also provide access to social support, health information, and opportunities for interaction that strengthen adolescents' social networks and, in certain contexts, even encourage more frequent face-to-face engagement (Steinsbekk et al., 2024). Consequently, researchers have examined dual-faceted interventions: limiting screen time and employing management strategies (e.g., psychoeducation, modifying dysfunctional beliefs about social media) have shown promising preliminary results in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression; other interventions, such as increasing physical activity, have also been associated with reductions in internalizing symptoms and may act as mediators that buffer the negative effects of social media use (Manske & Schmidt, 2019; Rutter et al., 2021). In sum, scholarly discussions underscore that the impact of social media on adolescent burnout and anxiety is complex—shaped by usage patterns, the nature of the content encountered, mediating mechanisms (such as sleep and social support), and the contextual interventions implemented.

Rationale of the study

Several studies have highlighted the psychological impact of exposure to religious content on mental health—particularly anxiety and burnout—demonstrating that positive messages, such as motivational and spiritual reinforcement, may enhance psychological resilience, whereas fear-based narratives have the potential to exacerbate anxiety in certain groups. However, prior research has generally not provided a detailed account of how different types of religious content consumed via social media influence university students, despite this demographic's frequent exposure to diverse forms of religious messaging amidst substantial academic and social pressures. Addressing this gap, the present study hypothesizes that exposure to religious content exerts an influence—albeit a modest one—on students' burnout and anxiety levels, by grouping religious content into five categories, namely: (1) content related to compassion and tranquility, (2) educational content, (3) inspirational and motivational content, (4) fear- and punishment-oriented content, and (5) ritual and worship content.

METHODS

Design

Explain the design of your study.

Participants

The sample size for this study's multivariate analysis was determined using G*Power analysis. Power analysis determines the minimum sample size by taking into account the part of a model with the largest number of predictors (Cheah et al., 2020). For G*Power calculation, the researchers applied an effect size of 0.15 (medium effect), a significance level (α) of 0.05, a statistical power (1-β) of 0.80, and five predictor variables—namely, compassion and tranquility content, educational content, inspirational and motivational content, fear- and punishment-oriented content, and ritual and worship content. Based on these parameters, the suggested minimum sample size was 92 respondents. However, this

study involved 1,098 respondents (approximately ten times larger than the minimum requirement).

A purposive sampling technique was employed to recruit 1,098 students from various Islamic Higher Education Institutions (*Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam*, PTKI) in the Lampung region. This sample size was chosen to ensure sufficient statistical power for correlational and multiple regression analyses in quantitative research, as well as to capture the diversity of students' experiences in accessing religious content through digital media. The selection of PTKI students as respondents was based on their high level of exposure to religious content—through formal coursework, social environments, and digital platforms. Moreover, PTKI students often face academic and social pressures that may contribute to symptoms of anxiety and emotional exhaustion (burnout), making them a particularly relevant population for investigation in this context.

Instruments

This study employed a set of questionnaire developed to measure exposure to religious content on social media, as well as levels of anxiety and burnout among university students. The instrument consisted of three main components, presented as follows:

Religious Content Exposure Questionnaire assessed students' exposure to five main categories of religious content commonly encountered on social media: (1) compassion and tranquility content, (2) educational content, (3) inspirational and motivational content, (4) fear- and punishment-oriented content, and (5) ritual and worship content. Provide 3 items for sample. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), with higher scores indicating greater exposure to the respective content type. Cronbach alpha?

Social Anxiety Scale for Adolescents (SAS-A) was used to measure social anxiety. The SAS-A is a widely utilized instrument in psychological research and consists of 18 items rated on a five-point Likert scale. Provide 3 items for sample. The Indonesian version of the SAS-A has been validated in previous studies, demonstrating strong internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.91.

Maslach Burnout Inventory–Student Survey (MBI-SS) was used to assess academic burnout across three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, cynicism toward studies, and reduced academic efficacy. The MBI-SS also employs a five-point Likert scale. Provide 3 items for sample. Previous research has established its validity and reliability among student populations. In this study, Cronbach's alpha value was 0.86 on the dimensions measured.

Procedures

This study employed a quantitative approach through an online survey administered to students enrolled at Islamic Higher Education Institutions (*Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam*, PTKI) in the Lampung region. The questionnaire was developed using the KoboToolbox application. Data was collected between December 2024 and January 2025 by distributing the survey link via social media platforms, academic WhatsApp groups, and student networks from intra- and extra-campus organizations. A purposive sampling technique was applied, with inclusion criteria as follows: (1) active PTKI students, (2) residing in the Lampung region, and (3) willing to participate in the survey voluntarily. Within approximately two months, responses were obtained from 1,098 participants who met

the eligibility criteria. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. Informed consent was obtained electronically through a consent form presented at the beginning of the online questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The collected survey data were processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0. Descriptive statistics were applied to summarize respondents' characteristics and patterns of religious content exposure, including frequency, platform, duration, type of content, mean values, and standard deviations (SD). These analyses were conducted for both demographic variables and the total as well as subscale scores of religious content exposure, anxiety, and burnout. Prior to regression analysis, data normality was assessed using the One-Sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, with a significance value greater than 0.05 indicating a normal distribution. Linearity tests were also performed to confirm the linear relationship between variables, with a significance level above 0.05 considered indicative of linearity. Simple linear regression analysis was then performed to examine the influence of religious content exposure (independent variable) on anxiety and burnout (dependent variables). A significance level of less than 0.05 was used as the threshold for determining statistically significant effects.

Scope and Limitations of the Methodology

This study specifically focused on students enrolled in Islamic Higher Education Institutions in the Lampung region to examine the influence of five categories of religious content on social media on symptoms of anxiety and burnout. This focus reflects an effort to understand the psychological dynamics of students in the context of digital religious content consumption. Nevertheless, several methodological limitations should be acknowledged. The cross-sectional design restricts the ability to draw causal inferences, and the absence of control over external variables—such as academic workload or economic conditions—may affect the validity of the observed relationships. Despite these limitations, the findings offer an important initial contribution and provide a foundation for future research employing longitudinal or experimental designs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

A descriptive statistical analysis was undertaken to provide a comprehensive overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, thereby establishing the contextual foundation for subsequent inferential analyses. A total of 1,098 participants fully completed the survey instrument. The variables examined included age distribution, type of educational institution, frequency of religious content consumption, preferred digital platforms for accessing such content, and duration of content engagement.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n=1098)

Characteristics	N	%
Age		

<18 years	10	0.92
18-19 years	563	51.71
20-21 years	292	26.81
22-24 years	217	19.93
≥ 25 years	7	0.64
Institution		
State Islamic Higher Education Institutions	855	78.5
Private Islamic Higher Education Institutions	234	21.5
Frequency of Religious Content Consumption		
Rarely (almost never)	19	1.69
Rarely (only occasionally)	57	5.20
Sometimes (several times a month)	356	32.45
Frequently (several times a week/every day)	504	45.91
Very often (several times a day)	162	14.75
Platform for Consuming Religious Content		
Facebook	24	2.15
Instagram	323	29.41
Youtube	175	15.93
Tiktok	576	52.49
Duration of Religious Content Consumption		
Less than 15 minutes	391	35.63
15-30 minutes	450	40.99
30-60 minutes	139	12.64
1-2 hours	79	7.16
More than 2 hours	39	3.58

The age distribution showed that most respondents were in early adolescence (18–19 years; 51.71%), followed by late adolescence (20–21 years; 26.81%) and young adulthood (22–24 years; 19.93%). Only 0.92% were younger than 18 years, and 0.64% were aged 25 years or older. In terms of institutional affiliation, the majority attended State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN; 78.5%), with 21.5% enrolled in Private Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIS).

Religious content consumption patterns indicated that 45.91% engaged frequently (several times per week or daily), while 14.75% did so very frequently (several times per day). TikTok was the most used platform (52.49%), followed by Instagram (29.41%) and YouTube (15.93%), with Facebook accounting for only 2.15%. This shows that short video-based platforms (such as TikTok) have become the main medium for the dissemination of religious content among students. Engagement duration was generally short to moderate, with

40.99% spending 15–30 minutes per session and 35.63% spending less than 15 minutes. This means that although the frequency of exposure is relatively high, the duration tends to be short to moderate, which is typical of fast and instant digital media consumption. These demographic patterns contextualize the observed digital religious engagement, reflecting generational media preferences and varying levels of exposure that may shape the reception of religious content.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviation, Minimum, and Maximum

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Compassion and tranquility content	16.58	2.35	8	20
Educational content	15.25	2.44	10	20
Inspirational and motivational content	15.83	2.27	8	20
Fear- and punishment-oriented content	15.58	2.40	8	20
Ritual and worship content	15.46	2.25	8	20
Anxiety symptoms	65.45	10.27	30	90
Burnout symptoms	26.85	8.36	10	43

Descriptive statistics (Table 2) show that among the five categories of religious digital content, compassion and tranquility content recorded the highest mean score (M = 16.58, SD = 2.35), indicating a stronger preference for this type of material. Comparable mean values were observed for inspirational and motivational content (M = 15.83, SD = 2.27), fear- and punishment-oriented content (M = 15.58, SD = 2.40), ritual and worship content (M = 15.46, SD = 2.25), and educational content (M = 15.25, SD = 2.44). The narrow standard deviations across categories suggest relatively consistent engagement among respondents. Anxiety symptoms had a mean score of 65.45 (SD = 10.27) on a scale of 30–90, indicating moderate-to-high levels within the sample. Burnout symptoms showed a lower mean of 26.85 (SD = 8.36) within a range of 10–43, though variability remained notable across participants.

Overall, the findings highlight that while respondents engage with a range of religious content types, materials emphasizing compassion and tranquility appear most prominent. To further examine the implications of these patterns, a multiple linear regression analysis was performed to assess the simultaneous effects of the five content types on reported symptoms of anxiety and burnout.

The Influence of Religious Content on Anxiety Symptoms

Multiple linear regression shows that the model included the five categories of religious content exposure, compassion and tranquility content, educational content, inspirational and motivational content, fear and punishment content, and ritual and worship content.

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Results on Anxiety Symptoms

Independent Variable	R^2	F	Sig.	B	β	t	Sig.
Compassion and tranquility content	0.014	3.109	0.009	0.418	0.096	2.215	0.027*
Educational content				0.242	0.057	1.130	0.259
Inspirational and motivational content				-0.532	-0.117	-2.339	0.020*
Fear- and punishment-oriented content				-0.486	-0.114	-2.193	0.028*
Ritual and worship content				0.283	0.062	1.543	0.123

Overall, the regression model was statistically significant (F = 3.109; p = 0.009), which means that the combination of the five independent variables had a significant relationship with the respondents' anxiety levels. The regression analysis results with an R Square value of 0.014 indicate that the variation in anxiety symptoms that can be explained by the five independent variables above is only 1.4%, while the remaining 98.6% is influenced by other factors outside the model.

Partially, content related to compassion and tranquility had a significant positive effect on anxiety (B = 0.418; p = 0.027), indicating that the higher the exposure to this content, the higher the reported anxiety levels. This is in contrast to inspirational and motivational content (B = −0.532; p = 0.020) and fear and punishment content (B = −0.486; p = 0.028), which have a significant negative effect and indicate that exposure to these two types of content is actually correlated with a decrease in anxiety. Meanwhile, educational content and ritual and worship content did not significantly affect students' anxiety levels.

The Influence of Religious Content on Burnout Symptoms

The regression model for burnout shows that statistically, the model is not significant (p = 0.381) and accounted for only 0.5% of the variance in burnout scores (R^2 = 0.005). None of the independent variables shows a significant individual effect.

Although the coefficient for inspirational and motivational content was negative (β = –0.096, p = 0.057), indicating a potential protective effect assumed that exposure to inspirational content may help reduce symptoms of burnout, the association did not reach statistical significance. The remaining predictors—compassion and tranquility content (β = –0.011, p = 0.800), educational content (β = 0.076, p = 0.139), fear- and punishment-oriented content (β = 0.037, p = 0.482), and ritual and worship content (β = 0.014, p = 0.731)—were all non-significant.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Results on Burnout Symptoms

Independent Variable	R^2	F	Sig. Model	B	β	t	Sig.
Compassion and tranquility content	0.005	1.060	0.381	–0.039	-0.011	-0.253	0.800

Educational content	+0.259	0.076	1.481	0.139
Inspirational and motivational content	–0.355	-0.096	-1.908	0.057
Fear- and punishment-oriented content	+0.128	0.037	0.704	0.482
Ritual and worship content	+0.052	0.014	0.344	0.731

*p < 0.05

Discussion

This study examines the relationship between exposure to religious content on social media and the psychological well-being of students at Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) in Lampung, with a focus on symptoms of anxiety and burnout. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis indicate that the combined effect of the five categories of religious content exhibits a marginally significant association with students' anxiety levels (p = 0.054), accounting for only 1.4% of the variance, while the overall model does not significantly predict burnout (p = 0.381). These findings suggest that exposure to religious content does not consistently influence psychological well-being. Nevertheless, specific patterns emerge: exposure to inspirational and motivational content (p = 0.020) and fear-and-punishment content (p = 0.028) is significantly and negatively correlated with anxiety, indicating that more frequent exposure to these content types is associated with lower anxiety levels. Conversely, exposure to compassion-and-tranquility content demonstrates a significant positive association with anxiety (p = 0.027), suggesting that higher exposure to such content corresponds with higher reported anxiety levels. Additionally, motivational and inspirational content shows a tendency to reduce burnout (p = 0.057), though it does not reach statistical significance. These findings offer new insights into the complex dynamics of religious content in the digital age, particularly in the context of PTKI students with a strong religious educational background. This section will interpret the findings, connect them to the literature, explore contextual factors, and formulate practical implications and directions for future research.

The overall insignificance of the regression model indicates that exposure to religious content on social media is not a major predictor of anxiety or burnout among PTKI students. This phenomenon can be explained from several perspectives. First, the heterogeneity of religious content—including compassion, education, motivation, fear, and worship—may create conflicting effects, thereby weakening the overall influence. For example, soothing loving content may neutralize the stressful effects of fear-inducing content. Second, individual variations in religiosity, life experiences, or sensitivity to digital content may moderate psychological impacts, as found in studies on religiosity and mental health (Malinakova et al., 2024). Third, external factors such as academic pressure, social dynamics, or community involvement, which were not controlled for in this study, are likely to be more dominant. The literature suggests that student burnout is more related to academic workload and lack of social support than to external factors such as the media (Kim et al., 2018). Thus, the influence of religious content may be diluted in the context of students' stressful lives.

One of the most interesting findings was the significant negative correlation between exposure to inspirational and motivational content and fear and punishment content with

anxiety. Contrary to the initial hypothesis, which assumed that fear narratives would increase anxiety, these results show a paradoxical effect: higher exposure to this content actually reduces anxiety. In the Islamic context, fear narratives, such as reminders of divine punishment, are often accompanied by messages of compassion and hope for forgiveness, which can create emotional balance. According to Mughal et al., radical narratives in religious or political contexts tend to reduce existential uncertainty, which is a trigger for mental disorders (Mughal et al., 2023). PTKI students, who are accustomed to formal religious education, may interpret this content as a moral reminder that reinforces their religious identity, rather than a personal threat. These findings challenge the assumption that fear narratives always increase stress and highlight the importance of cultural and educational context in mediating the psychological impact of religious content.

Although not statistically significant, the tendency of motivational content to reduce burnout offers promising insights. Inspirational materials, such as motivational quotes or exemplary narratives, can enhance a sense of purpose and emotional resilience, both of which serve as protective factors against burnout. In the context of students, motivational messages may help alleviate academic fatigue by providing emotional encouragement or a positive perspective on challenges. However, the relatively weak effect observed in this study may be attributed to the short exposure duration (with the majority of respondents spending only 15–30 minutes per day) or to variations in the quality of motivational content on platforms such as TikTok. These findings align with Acevedo et al., who reported that exposure to religious materials as positive content can improve well-being when the material is relevant to users' needs (Acevedo et al., 2022). Therefore, future research needs to explore how the intensity, quality, and relevance of motivational content affect burnout in the long term.

The context of PTKI students in Lampung is highly relevant in interpreting the results. The intensive religious education at PTKI may shape how students interpret fear-related content, enabling them to integrate it as a constructive moral reminder. Islamic cultural norms in Lampung, which emphasize solidarity and community, may also moderate psychological impacts, as found in studies on collective religiosity. Additionally, the dominance of TikTok as the primary platform (52.49% of respondents) suggests that the short video format, with its fast-paced and emotional narratives, may influence how religious messages are received. This aligns with Harvard's findings that digital media transforms religious expression into something more performative and visual, which can influence social and psychological impacts (Hjarvard, 2016).

Limitations and future suggestions

This study has several limitations. The cross-sectional design limits the ability to infer causality, and the use of self-report questionnaires is prone to biases such as social desirability and recall inaccuracy. The focus on students from Islamic higher education institutions (PTKI) in Lampung restricts the generalizability of findings to other populations, such as non-religious students or those from different regions. Additionally, unmeasured external variables—such as academic pressure or social support—may have influenced the results, as highlighted in the burnout literature.

Nevertheless, the large sample size (n = 1,098) and the use of validated instruments (SAS-A and MBI-SS) enhance the reliability of the findings. Future research could adopt a longitudinal design to examine the long-term effects of religious content exposure, incorporating variables such as religiosity, coping strategies, and academic stress. Qualitative

studies may provide deeper insights into how students interpret different types of religious content, revealing underlying cognitive and emotional processes. Furthermore, experimental designs that manipulate content exposure could better establish causal relationships.

Implication

These findings carry significant practical implications. First, educators and counselors in Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) should recognize that fear-based content is not inherently detrimental; rather, it can provide moral certainty for students with a strong religious background. A balanced approach—integrating fear-based narratives with messages of compassion—may help promote psychological well-being. Second, religious content creators on social media may leverage motivational content to assist students in overcoming burnout, ensuring that such messages remain relevant and authentic. Third, educational institutions can develop digital religious literacy programs to help students critically and healthily navigate religious content, thereby reducing the risk of negative psychological effects.

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that exposure to religious content on social media—encompassing dimensions of compassion, educational messages, motivation, fear and punishment, as well as worship—exerts a complex influence on anxiety and burnout among students of Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) in Lampung. Specifically, content related to inspirational and motivational, and fear and punishment appears to alleviate anxiety by providing moral certainty, whereas motivational content has the potential to reduce burnout by fostering emotional resilience. The dominance of platforms such as TikTok, with their short-form video formats, seems to amplify the emotional impact of such content, offering a rapid and engaging mode of delivery for students.

These findings suggest that carefully designed digital religious content can serve as a supportive tool for enhancing students' psychological well-being. Future research is encouraged to expand the sample size and employ longitudinal designs to better understand the long-term effects of exposure to digital religious content. Moreover, examining the influence of other social media platforms and incorporating variables such as religiosity levels may yield deeper insights into the most effective approaches for supporting students' mental health.

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