Vol. 4, No. 4, December 2026, pp. 3574-3598
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
POST AXIAL
FUTURISTIC TEACHING AND LEARNING
https://journal.amorfati.id/index.php/postaxial | | ISSN 3025-7549

Student Management in Strengthening Religious Culture Amid the Negative Impacts of Social Media

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Article History:
Received:
19-09-2026
Revised:
22-10-2026
Accepted:
06-11-2026

Keywords:
Student Management;
Religious Culture;
Islamic Education;
Social Media;
Character Development.

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Abstract:
The widespread use of social media has created new challenges for Islamic educational institutions in nurturing students' religious character, self-discipline, and moral responsibility. This study aims to examine student management in strengthening religious culture amid the negative impacts of social media, focusing on program planning and implementation, strategies for religious value internalization, and the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing these efforts. Employing a qualitative phenomenological approach, the study involves 12 informants selected purposively from relevant educational stakeholders. Data are collected through semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation, then analyzed thematically to identify patterns of institutional practice and participants' experiences. The study is conceptually informed by Schein's organizational culture theory, Bandura's social learning and social cognitive theories, Kelman's framework of attitude change, and the European Commission's Digital Competence Framework. The analysis highlights the importance of integrating systematic student management with religious habituation, educator role modelling, persuasive guidance, and responsible digital literacy. Religious activities, including Qur'anic recitation, congregational prayer, and the cultivation of polite behaviour, can provide meaningful opportunities for character development when supported by consistent educational practices and students' understanding of their underlying values. Furthermore, social media should be approached not exclusively as a source of risk but also as a digital environment requiring critical evaluation, ethical awareness, and self-regulation. The study underscores the need for Islamic educational institutions to move beyond compliance-oriented religious routines toward a more integrated approach that connects institutional culture, students' personal responsibility, and ethical digital participation. This perspective offers an analytical foundation for developing student management practices that remain responsive to contemporary technological challenges while sustaining the educational and moral purposes of Islamic education.

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Introduction (مقدمة)

Education plays a fundamental role in developing individuals who are intellectually capable, morally responsible, and socially engaged. Beyond the transmission of knowledge, education is expected to cultivate values, attitudes, and behaviours that enable students to participate constructively in society. Ki Hadjar Dewantara's educational philosophy emphasizes the development of the intellectual, moral, and physical dimensions of the learner, reflecting a holistic understanding of education as a process of human formation. From this perspective, character education constitutes an essential component of educational practice because students' development cannot be measured solely through academic achievement but must also consider their moral awareness, self-discipline, responsibility, and capacity to distinguish appropriate from inappropriate conduct. Character formation becomes particularly important during adolescence, when individuals experience substantial changes in identity, social relationships, and patterns of decision-making. Consequently, educational institutions have a strategic responsibility to create environments that support the internalization of positive values and their consistent application in everyday life. The relationship between educational development and individual well-being also highlights the importance of educational practices that address students' broader social and moral experiences (Kwok & Cain, 2023).

The responsibility of educational institutions to cultivate students' character has become increasingly complex amid the rapid expansion of digital technology. Smartphones and social media platforms have transformed how adolescents obtain information, communicate with peers, construct identities, and engage with social and cultural influences. Although digital technology offers considerable opportunities for learning, collaboration, and access to religious knowledge, its use may also expose students to inappropriate content, excessive entertainment, cyberbullying, social comparison, and patterns of online interaction that conflict with educational and religious values. Unregulated or excessive gadget use may further interfere with concentration, face-to-face interaction, and students' engagement in academic and social activities (Fanani et al., 2022). Suryadi et al. (2025), in their discussion of efforts to prevent gadget use among students at an Islamic boarding school, highlight the relevance of educational intervention in responding to technology-related challenges. Nevertheless, the implications of social media should not be understood exclusively in terms of its potential harms. Its effects are shaped by the purposes of use, the digital environment, students' self-regulation, and the guidance provided by families and educational institutions. Therefore, the central educational challenge is not simply to restrict access to digital technology but to develop students' capacity to engage with it responsibly while maintaining consistent moral and religious commitments (Mutrikah & Muhammad Ghafar, 2025).

Within Islamic educational settings, religious culture represents an important foundation for supporting this process. Religious culture can be understood as the shared values, routines, norms, and patterns of behaviour through which religious principles become embedded in the everyday life of an educational institution. Its development may be reflected in congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, religious learning activities, respectful communication, teachers' exemplary conduct, and students' responsibility toward themselves and others. However, the presence of religious activities does not necessarily indicate that religious values have been internalized by students (Fathinatul Wafiqah Lubis et al., 2026). The effectiveness of religious culture formation also depends on whether students understand the meaning of these practices, participate willingly, and demonstrate corresponding attitudes and behaviours beyond formally organized activities. Research by Putri Utami Ramadhan and Rizal Nugraha Hidayat (2024), which addresses the optimization of social media for strengthening the religious character of young people in the digital era, provides a relevant starting point for understanding the

relationship between digital environments and religious character development. This perspective suggests that social media may function not only as a source of challenges but also as a potential medium for religious education when its use is appropriately guided. Accordingly, strengthening religious culture requires educational institutions to connect established religious practices with the realities of students' digital lives (Putri Utami Ramadhan & Rizal Nugraha Hidayat, 2024).

In this context, student management constitutes a strategic dimension of educational management. Rather than being limited to administrative procedures, student management encompasses the planning, organization, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of activities designed to support students' development throughout their educational experience. When directed toward strengthening religious culture, these managerial functions can provide a systematic framework for translating institutional religious values into consistent educational practices. Planning determines the objectives and priorities of religious development programs; organization clarifies the responsibilities of school leaders, teachers, student affairs personnel, and religious mentors; implementation integrates religious routines, guidance, role modelling, and student participation into everyday educational activities; and evaluation assesses the implementation of programs and identifies areas requiring improvement. Such an approach is particularly relevant in the digital era because responses to social media-related challenges cannot rely exclusively on prohibitions or disciplinary sanctions. Instead, educational institutions need coordinated strategies that combine religious habituation, persuasive guidance, digital literacy, behavioural supervision, and collaboration with families. Through this integration, student management can be examined as an institutional process that connects religious values, educational practices, and students' changing social environments (Gani et al., 2026; Hidayati et al., 2026).

Despite the relevance of these issues, an important analytical question remains: how are student management practices organized and implemented to strengthen religious culture while responding to the negative influences associated with social media? Research on religious character development and digital technology provides a useful foundation for understanding students' moral and religious challenges. However, the relationship between these concerns and the managerial processes through which educational institutions respond to them requires closer empirical examination (Ju'subaidi et al., 2025). In particular, the discussion needs to move beyond identifying the importance of religious character or recommending religious activities toward examining how planning, role allocation, program implementation, monitoring, and evaluation work together in institutional practice. It is also necessary to investigate how educational actors interpret social media-related challenges, how they integrate preventive and developmental approaches into student management, and what contextual factors support or constrain these efforts. The research gap addressed in this study therefore lies in the need for a more integrated, practice-oriented understanding of student management as a mechanism for strengthening religious culture amid the challenges of social media. This gap should be substantiated through a systematic review of recent empirical studies, rather than assumed from the limited number of references currently available (Irwan et al., 2025).

The novelty of this study lies in its proposed integration of student management processes, religious culture formation, and responses to social media-related challenges within a single empirical analytical framework. Instead of treating religious culture as an isolated collection of religious activities or social media as a problem requiring restriction alone, the study examines how managerial arrangements may connect institutional religious commitments with students' everyday experiences in digital environments. This perspective enables an analysis of the relationships among program planning, coordination among educational personnel, religious habituation, student guidance, supervision, and evaluation. It also creates an opportunity to distinguish between the formal implementation of religious programs and the ways in which

educational actors understand and assess their contribution to students' religious attitudes and behaviour. The study does not assume in advance that particular management practices are effective; rather, their implementation, perceived contributions, and limitations are examined through qualitative evidence. Its intended contribution is to develop a context-sensitive understanding of how student management can support the continuity of religious culture while addressing the educational challenges associated with social media use.

Based on this rationale, this study aims to describe and analyse student management in strengthening religious culture amid the negative influences of social media. Specifically, it investigates three interconnected dimensions: (1) how student management is planned, organized, implemented, and evaluated in religious culture development; (2) what strategies educational institutions employ to foster students' religious practices, attitudes, and behaviour while responding to social media-related challenges; and (3) what supporting and inhibiting factors shape the implementation of these strategies. Using a qualitative approach, the study seeks to generate an empirically grounded account of institutional practices and the perspectives of relevant educational actors. Its findings are expected to contribute to educational management scholarship by clarifying the managerial dimensions of religious culture development and to educational practice by informing the design of more coherent, participatory, and contextually responsive student management strategies in Islamic educational institutions.

Method (منهج)

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a phenomenological design to explore student management in strengthening religious culture amid the negative impacts of social media. The phenomenological approach was selected to understand how educational actors experience, interpret, and implement student management practices in fostering students' religious attitudes and behaviour within their institutional environment. The study focused on the planning, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of religious culture programs, including religious habituation, teacher role modelling, student guidance, and institutional responses to social media-related challenges (Fauzi et al., 2024). Data were collected from 12 informants selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in or experience with student management and religious culture development. The informants represented relevant educational stakeholders, including school leaders or student affairs administrators, teachers or religious mentors, and students. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation to obtain comprehensive information about institutional practices and participants' lived experiences. Interviews explored participants' perspectives on religious programs and social media use, while observations and documentary analysis provided contextual evidence to complement their accounts (Sugari & Hilalludin, 2025; Wiresti & Hilalludin, 2025).

The collected data were analysed thematically through data familiarization, coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretive analysis. Particular attention was given to the relationships between managerial practices, religious habituation, student participation, and challenges associated with social media use. The analysis also identified supporting and inhibiting factors that shaped the implementation of religious culture programs within the educational setting. To strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings, the study employed source and methodological triangulation by comparing information from different informants and data collection techniques (Hilalludin & Althof, 2024; Januardi & Jumadi, 2024). The researcher also maintained systematic records of the research process and critically reflected on personal assumptions during data interpretation. Ethical considerations included voluntary participation, informed consent or appropriate permission procedures, and the protection of participants'

identities, particularly those of students. Through this methodological framework, the study sought to develop an empirically grounded understanding of how student management practices contribute to strengthening religious culture and how educational institutions respond to the challenges posed by social media (Al Jaber et al., 2025; Permadi & Sya'ban, 2025).

Result (نتائج)

Student Management Planning and Implementation in Strengthening Religious Culture

The findings indicate that student management provides an important organizational foundation for strengthening religious culture within the educational environment. Religious culture development requires more than the provision of religious activities; it also depends on how these activities are planned, organized, implemented, and integrated into students' daily routines. In this context, student management serves as a framework for translating institutional religious values into structured educational practices. The planning process encompasses the selection of appropriate religious activities, the organization of implementation schedules, the involvement of educational personnel, and the adjustment of programs to students' needs and available institutional resources. This approach reflects the understanding that students are active participants in educational development rather than merely recipients of institutional regulations.

The religious culture programs described in the research materials include prayers before lessons, Qur'anic recitation as part of religious literacy activities, the recitation of *Asmaul Husna* following morning assemblies, congregational Zuhr prayers, scheduled Dhuha prayers, and the habituation of greetings and polite communication. These activities represent practical efforts to integrate religious values into everyday school life. Their significance lies not only in the performance of individual rituals but also in the opportunities they provide for students to develop discipline, familiarity with religious practices, and respectful relationships within the educational community. Nevertheless, the extent to which these activities foster lasting internalization of religious values must be assessed through evidence of students' participation, understanding, and behaviour rather than inferred solely from the existence of scheduled programs (Syamsuriani et al., 2026; Zuhri et al., 2026).

The planning and implementation of religious culture programs can be understood through several interconnected managerial dimensions. The following table summarizes the principal dimensions identified in the available research materials.

Table 1. Student Management Practices in Religious Culture Development

Management dimension	Identified practices	Intended educational contribution
Program planning	Scheduling religious routines and literacy activities	Establishing clear and consistent religious development objectives
Program organization	Coordinating teachers, school personnel, and students	Clarifying responsibilities and supporting program continuity
Implementation	Prayer, Qur'anic recitation, *Asmaul Husna*, and religious habituation	Integrating religious practices into everyday school life
Role modelling	Encouraging greetings, politeness, and respectful interaction	Providing behavioural examples for students
Resource adjustment	Considering student needs, teacher capacity, and available facilities	Supporting feasible and sustainable implementation

The findings also highlight the importance of institutional coordination in sustaining religious culture. Religious programs require consistency between institutional expectations and the practices demonstrated by educational personnel. When teachers participate in religious activities and model the values they communicate, students have opportunities to encounter religious principles through both instruction and daily interaction. Similarly, the integration of religious literacy and worship into established school schedules may create a more predictable environment for religious habituation. However, program continuity should not be equated automatically with behavioural transformation. The relationship between institutional planning and students' religious development therefore remains an important aspect of the analysis (Susanto & Dwijayanto, 2022).

Strategies for Strengthening Religious Culture and Responding to Social Media Challenges

The second research focus concerns the strategies through which religious culture can be strengthened amid the negative influences associated with social media. The research framework identifies three interconnected dimensions: religious habituation and teacher role modelling, the integration of religious values into social media use, and students' experiences and interpretations of religious practices. These dimensions connect the institutional management of religious activities with the broader social and digital environments in which students develop their attitudes and behaviour.

Religious habituation constitutes one of the principal strategies represented in the research materials. Activities such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, and the consistent use of respectful language provide recurring opportunities for students to practise religiously oriented behaviour. Teacher role modelling complements these activities by demonstrating how religious values can be expressed through everyday conduct. From a student management perspective, habituation and role modelling are most meaningful when they are supported by clear expectations, appropriate guidance, and opportunities for students to understand the values underlying institutional routines. This approach emphasizes the developmental dimension of student management rather than relying exclusively on compliance with school regulations (Siregar & Nuddin, 2025; Sri Hardianty et al., 2025).

A further dimension concerns the relationship between religious education and students' use of social media. Digital platforms may expose students to content, communication patterns, and social influences that conflict with institutional religious expectations. At the same time, these platforms may provide access to Qur'anic learning resources, religious lectures, and educational materials. Consequently, educational responses need to distinguish between the potential risks of particular forms of use and the educational opportunities offered by digital technology. Strategies relevant to this issue include developing digital literacy, encouraging critical evaluation of online content, promoting respectful online communication, and guiding students toward responsible technology use. The extent to which these strategies are actually implemented in the research setting must be established through interview, observation, and documentary evidence (Silsilya Tazkia Amaradien, Najwatul Zahro, et.al, 2026).

Students' experiences are also important because participation in religious activities does not necessarily indicate that students have personally internalized the values being promoted. Students may interpret religious routines as meaningful opportunities for spiritual development, as institutional obligations, or as a combination of both. Examining these interpretations helps explain how institutional programs are experienced at the individual level. It also enables the researcher to investigate whether students perceive religious guidance as relevant to their everyday decisions, including their interactions with social media. These experiences should be represented through authentic interview excerpts and observational evidence rather than assumed from the intended objectives of the programs (Sarip et al., 2023).

Table 2. Strategies for Religious Culture Strengthening in the Social Media Era

Strategic dimension	Main focus	Evidence required for empirical interpretation
Religious habituation	Regular worship, Qur'anic recitation, and respectful conduct	Observation records and descriptions of program implementation
Teacher role modelling	Consistency between teachers' conduct and religious guidance	Classroom observations and teacher and student interviews
Digital religious literacy	Critical evaluation of online content and responsible media use	Interviews, digital-use guidance, and relevant institutional documents
Student participation	Students' involvement in religious programs and their perceived meaning	Student interviews and observations of participation
Integration of religious values	Applying religious principles to online and offline behaviour	Accounts of students' experiences and examples supported by field data

Taken together, these dimensions provide a framework for understanding religious culture development as a process involving institutional arrangements, educational interactions, and students' experiences. The key analytical issue is how these dimensions operate together in practice. The presence of religious routines may provide a foundation for character development, while teacher guidance and digital literacy may help students relate religious values to contemporary social environments. However, the actual contribution of each strategy must be established from the empirical findings, including variations in implementation and the perspectives of different participants (Rahmah & Ilham, 2022).

Evaluation, Supporting and Inhibiting Factors, and the Influence of Social Media

The third research focus examines how religious culture programs are monitored and evaluated, together with the factors that support or constrain their implementation. Evaluation is an essential managerial function because it enables educational institutions to examine whether planned activities are implemented consistently, identify implementation challenges, and determine which aspects require improvement. In the context of religious culture development, evaluation should consider not only attendance and participation in scheduled activities but also the quality of students' engagement, their understanding of religious values, and the extent to which expected behaviours are reflected in everyday interactions. Such indicators need to be interpreted carefully because outward compliance does not necessarily demonstrate internalized religious commitment (Nurully Kesuma Ningrum et al., 2026).

The research framework also directs attention to the institutional and interpersonal conditions that may shape the implementation of religious culture programs. Potential supporting factors include consistent teacher role modelling, coordination among educational personnel, clear institutional expectations, opportunities for student participation, and cooperation between schools and families. Potential constraints include differences in students' motivation, inconsistent implementation of religious routines, limitations in institutional resources, and difficulties in guiding students' social media use. These factors represent analytical categories for examining the research setting; their presence and relative importance must be confirmed by the actual data (Nur Anisah Nasution et al., 2026; Nurhayati et al., 2025).

Social media is particularly relevant to this evaluation because its influence may extend beyond the school environment. Students' online experiences can affect their attention, social interactions, exposure to information, and perceptions of acceptable behaviour. However, these

relationships should not be interpreted as direct causal effects without sufficient evidence. The analysis therefore needs to examine how participants describe the relationship between media use and their religious practices, what specific challenges they identify, and how the institution responds to those challenges. This perspective allows the study to distinguish between perceived risks, observed behavioural changes, and institutional concerns.

Table 3. Evaluation Dimensions and Factors Affecting Religious Culture Development

Analytical aspect	Issues to examine	Implications for student management
Program monitoring	Consistency of participation and implementation of religious routines	Identifying implementation gaps and the need for follow-up
Evaluation of student development	Religious conduct, discipline, respectful interaction, and understanding of values	Assessing development beyond formal attendance
Institutional support	Teacher role modelling, program coordination, regulations, and available resources	Strengthening consistency and continuity
Student-related constraints	Motivation, participation, and differences in individual experiences	Adapting guidance to students' needs
Social media challenges	Distracting content, online interactions, and competing influences	Integrating digital literacy and appropriate guidance
Family and institutional collaboration	Communication and coordination regarding student development	Supporting continuity between school and home, where applicable

The findings framework suggests that strengthening religious culture requires a continuous management process rather than the isolated implementation of religious activities. Planning establishes the direction of the program, implementation translates institutional objectives into educational practices, and evaluation provides a basis for reviewing consistency and identifying areas for improvement. Supporting and inhibiting factors influence each stage, while social media introduces additional considerations concerning students' experiences beyond the formal educational environment. The final empirical analysis should therefore demonstrate how these processes and conditions interact in the research setting, using interview excerpts, observation records, and documentary evidence to substantiate each principal finding (Niklová & Hanesová, 2024).

Discussion (مناقشة)

Student Management Planning and Implementation in Strengthening Religious Culture

Student management plays a strategic role in strengthening religious culture because it provides an organizational framework through which educational values are translated into systematic, continuous, and meaningful practices. In Islamic educational institutions, the development of religious character cannot be separated from the way students are planned for, guided, supervised, and supported throughout their educational experiences. Religious activities may be conducted regularly, but their educational significance depends on whether they are integrated into the institution's broader objectives, supported by clear responsibilities, and connected to students' daily behaviour. Accordingly, student management should be understood not merely as an administrative function but also as a pedagogical process that creates the

conditions for religious values to become part of students' personal and social lives (Ansori & Nugraha, 2026; Fadhilah & Wasliman, 2026a).

The planning of religious culture programs requires educational institutions to identify the religious and behavioural competencies they seek to develop, determine appropriate activities, allocate responsibilities, and establish mechanisms for implementation and evaluation. Activities such as praying before lessons, Qur'anic recitation, reciting Asmaul Husna after morning assembly, performing congregational Zuhr prayer, scheduling Dhuha prayer, and encouraging greetings and polite communication can function as interconnected components of a religious educational environment. Their importance lies not only in the frequency of their implementation but also in the educational meaning attached to them. When these activities are deliberately integrated into student management, they can provide repeated opportunities for students to practise religious values within structured and socially supported environments (Fathurrohman & Mirza, 2025a).

This interpretation can be examined through Schein's (2010) theory of organizational culture, which distinguishes between visible cultural practices, officially expressed values, and the deeper assumptions that guide members' behaviour. In the context of Islamic education, routine religious activities constitute visible expressions of institutional culture. The institution's stated commitment to Islamic values represents its espoused values, while the deeper objective is to cultivate an understanding that worship, discipline, politeness, and responsibility are meaningful parts of everyday life. These three dimensions are not automatically aligned. An institution may successfully organize religious activities while students participate primarily because of external expectations. Therefore, the central challenge of student management is to move beyond the visible performance of religious routines toward the internalization of the values underlying those routines (Fitriani et al., 2026; Imani et al., 2026).

From this perspective, the quality of planning should be assessed not simply by the number of religious programs organized but by the relationship between institutional objectives, educational practices, and students' experiences. A program may be administratively well organized yet have limited formative value if students do not understand its purpose. Conversely, a relatively simple activity may have substantial educational significance when teachers explain its meaning, demonstrate the relevant behaviour, and encourage students to reflect on their experiences. The distinction is important because the ultimate objective of religious culture is not merely to produce observable compliance but to support the development of religious awareness and responsible conduct (Istiqomah et al., 2026; Khoriah, 2026a).

The implementation of religious culture also requires coordination among school leaders, student affairs personnel, teachers, religious mentors, and students. School leaders establish direction and institutional priorities, while teachers and mentors translate these priorities into daily interactions. Students, meanwhile, should not be regarded exclusively as recipients of rules and programs. Their participation can contribute to the sustainability of religious culture because they influence peer relationships, classroom atmosphere, and the social acceptance of institutional values. This perspective places student management within a participatory educational framework in which the effectiveness of religious programs depends on coordination, consistent communication, and shared responsibility (Najwa et al., 2025; Natalia et al., 2026).

The relationship between institutional organization and individual development can also be understood through educational management functions, particularly planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating. Planning identifies the intended outcomes; organizing establishes responsibilities and resources; implementation translates plans into educational practices; and evaluation provides information about the extent to which those practices achieve their purposes.

These functions should operate as a continuous cycle rather than as separate administrative stages. For example, if students participate regularly in congregational prayer but demonstrate limited understanding of the values of discipline and responsibility associated with the practice, the institution may need to reconsider its guidance, instructional approach, or opportunities for student reflection. Evaluation, therefore, should inform the improvement of educational processes rather than merely confirm that activities have taken place (Nugroho et al., 2026).

The relevance of this management perspective becomes more apparent in the context of social media. Students' religious and moral development takes place not only within school or pesantren environments but also through their interactions with digital content, online communities, and social influences beyond institutional supervision. Religious culture programs consequently need to be designed with an awareness that students encounter multiple sources of information and competing behavioural models. A structured educational environment can provide stability and guidance, but its influence is more likely to be meaningful when students can relate institutional values to situations they encounter in their everyday digital lives (Nuraini, 2026).

Thus, student management contributes to strengthening religious culture by establishing continuity between institutional expectations and students' daily experiences. Its effectiveness should not be measured exclusively through administrative indicators, such as attendance at religious activities, but also through evidence of growing awareness, consistency of conduct, and the ability to apply religious values in different contexts. This interpretation provides the basis for understanding religious culture as an institutional and educational process rather than simply a collection of scheduled activities.

Strategies for Strengthening Religious Culture and Responding to Social Media Challenges

Religious Habituation and Teacher Role Modelling

Habituation is an important strategy for developing religious culture because repeated practices create opportunities for students to become familiar with religious routines and integrate them into their daily lives. In educational settings, activities such as Qur'anic recitation, congregational prayer, and the practice of polite communication provide structured occasions for students to translate religious knowledge into observable behaviour. Nevertheless, habituation should not be understood as a mechanical repetition of activities. Its educational value depends on whether repetition is accompanied by explanation, guidance, positive reinforcement, and opportunities for students to understand the values underlying the practices (Ramadan & Soro, 2025; Rina Miftakhi & Yopi Malagola, 2025).

Bandura's (1977) social learning theory provides a relevant explanation of the role of teachers and educational mentors in this process. According to this perspective, people learn not only through direct instruction but also by observing the behaviour of others and considering the consequences of that behaviour. Teachers therefore function as behavioural models whose conduct may influence how students interpret institutional expectations. When teachers consistently demonstrate punctuality, respectful communication, religious commitment, and responsibility, they provide concrete examples of the values being promoted. By contrast, a discrepancy between what teachers demand and what they practise may weaken the credibility of the educational message (Putri Utami Ramadhan & Rizal Nugraha Hidayat, 2024).

The theoretical implication is that strengthening religious culture requires consistency between verbal instruction and observable conduct. A teacher who asks students to arrive punctually but repeatedly arrives late communicates conflicting expectations. Similarly, an educator who encourages polite speech but humiliates students when correcting their mistakes may undermine the value of respectful communication. Role modelling is therefore not an

additional element of religious education; it is part of the mechanism through which institutional values acquire credibility and become socially meaningful (Rina Miftakhi & Yopi Malagola, 2025; Sari, 2025).

However, the influence of role modelling should not be interpreted as automatic. Students may observe the same behaviour but respond differently depending on their prior experiences, relationships with teachers, personal motivations, and social environments. Bandura's theory consequently directs attention to the interaction between behavioural models, individual characteristics, and environmental conditions. In practical terms, educational institutions need to create environments in which religious behaviour is demonstrated consistently, positively reinforced, and supported by relationships that allow students to ask questions and discuss difficulties without fear of humiliation (Silalahi et al., 2026a; Widiyanti et al., 2026).

A persuasive approach to religious education can complement habituation and role modelling. Rather than relying exclusively on instructions or sanctions, educators can explain the reasons behind expectations, listen to students' perspectives, and connect religious principles with situations they recognize. This approach acknowledges that behavioural development involves both external guidance and internal understanding. When students are encouraged to understand why punctuality, prayer, politeness, and responsibility matter, religious practices can become more meaningful than routines performed solely to avoid punishment (Agirdag & Muijs, 2023; Arshad et al., 2023).

The distinction between compliance and internalization can be clarified through Kelman's (1958) framework of attitude change. Kelman identifies compliance, identification, and internalization as different processes through which attitudes and behaviour may change. Compliance occurs when individuals follow expectations to obtain approval or avoid negative consequences. Identification develops when individuals adopt behaviours because they value a relationship or identify with a particular person or group. Internalization occurs when the values underlying the behaviour become consistent with an individual's own beliefs.

Applied to religious culture, this framework suggests that students may participate in religious activities for different reasons. Some may participate because the activity is compulsory, others because they respect their teachers or peers, and others because they understand and personally value the religious principles involved. These forms of motivation can coexist, and students may move between them depending on circumstances. Therefore, visible participation alone cannot establish whether religious values have been internalized. More convincing evidence would include students' explanations of the meaning of their practices, their willingness to act responsibly without constant supervision, and their ability to apply religious principles in situations where external monitoring is limited (Afrilyasanti et al., 2026; Agustina, 2026).

This does not mean that institutional rules and discipline are unnecessary. Clear expectations provide structure, particularly when students are still developing self-regulation. The more important issue is how rules are implemented and what educational purpose they serve. Rules accompanied by explanation, fair treatment, positive examples, and constructive feedback can support the development of responsibility. Rules applied inconsistently or primarily through fear, however, may encourage students to focus on avoiding punishment rather than understanding the values behind the rules (Silsilya Tazkia Amaradien, Najwatul Zahro, et.al, 2026).

Accordingly, habituation and role modelling should be treated as complementary strategies. Habituation provides repeated opportunities for practice, while role modelling makes the intended values visible in everyday interactions. Persuasive guidance helps students interpret those practices, and reflection provides opportunities to connect them with personal understanding. Together, these processes offer a stronger conceptual basis for religious character

development than an approach that equates the successful implementation of religious activities with the automatic formation of religious character.

Integrating Religious Values with Responsible Social Media Use

Social media presents a distinctive challenge for student management because it expands the environments in which students encounter information, construct identities, develop relationships, and observe behavioural models. Digital platforms can provide access to Qur'anic learning materials, religious lectures, educational discussions, and communities that support positive religious engagement. At the same time, students may encounter misleading religious information, harmful communication, inappropriate content, excessive entertainment, and social pressures that compete with learning and religious responsibilities. The educational issue is therefore not simply whether students use social media, but how they interpret, select, and respond to the content and interactions available through digital platforms (Thant Sin, 2023; Veronita et al., 2025).

Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory helps explain this relationship by emphasizing reciprocal interactions among personal factors, behaviour, and the environment. Students' online behaviour is shaped by the content they encounter, the responses they receive from others, their existing beliefs, and their capacity for self-regulation. At the same time, students actively select content, participate in online communities, and contribute to the digital environments in which they interact. This means that social media should not be treated as an independent force that inevitably produces negative outcomes. Its influence depends on the interaction between platform characteristics, patterns of use, individual agency, and the social and educational contexts surrounding students (Silalahi et al., 2026b; Sugiar et al., 2025).

This distinction is important for avoiding an overly simplistic interpretation of digital technology. Excessive or poorly regulated use may compete with study time, interrupt concentration, expose students to inappropriate content, or encourage dependence on online approval. Nevertheless, the existence of these risks does not justify assuming that every student experiences them or that every form of social media use weakens religious commitment. A more appropriate analysis examines how specific patterns of use interact with students' responsibilities, values, and self-regulatory capacities. Empirical claims about reduced religious practice, declining discipline, or changes in moral behaviour must therefore be supported by the actual experiences reported by participants and by relevant observational evidence (Fadhilah & Wasliman, 2026b).

Within this context, religious culture programs need to extend beyond offline routines and address the ethical dimensions of digital participation. Students can be encouraged to evaluate the reliability of religious information, verify the sources of quotations and religious claims, communicate respectfully, protect personal information, and consider the consequences of sharing content. These practices connect religious principles with concrete digital decisions. For instance, the values of honesty, responsibility, modesty, respect, and avoiding harm can provide ethical criteria for evaluating online behaviour. Religious education thereby becomes relevant to the situations students encounter beyond the classroom (Cansoy et al., 2025; Caspillo, 2025).

The European Commission's DigComp 2.2 framework provides a complementary perspective by emphasizing digital competence through knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Vuorikari et al., 2022). Its relevance lies in the recognition that digital competence involves more than technical proficiency. Individuals also need to evaluate information, interact appropriately, manage aspects of digital life, and respond to digital risks. When incorporated into Islamic educational settings, these competencies can be connected with religious and moral reflection. Students can be guided to distinguish credible from unreliable information, recognize manipulative content, assess the appropriateness of online interactions, and consider whether

their digital activities align with their educational responsibilities and personal values (Fathurrohman & Mirza, 2025b).

This integration requires more than prohibiting devices or warning students about negative content. Restrictions may be appropriate in particular settings, especially where digital use disrupts learning or violates institutional rules. However, restrictions alone do not necessarily prepare students to make responsible decisions when supervision is absent. Educational institutions also need to cultivate judgement, self-control, and ethical awareness. Students should learn not only which actions are prohibited but also how to assess situations in which explicit rules may not provide a complete answer (Geletu, 2026).

A balanced strategy can therefore combine institutional boundaries with digital literacy and reflective guidance. Teachers and student affairs personnel can clarify appropriate patterns of device use, explain the reasons behind restrictions, discuss realistic online scenarios, and help students evaluate the relationship between digital habits and religious responsibilities. Such guidance is more likely to support long-term development when students understand the purpose of the rules and are given opportunities to practise responsible decision-making (Hussain et al., 2025; Khoriah, 2026b).

Social media also creates opportunities for religious learning that should not be overlooked. Students may access educational content, share beneficial knowledge, and maintain supportive relationships through digital platforms. The challenge for educational management is to strengthen students' ability to distinguish constructive uses from harmful or distracting patterns. A prohibition-oriented approach may overlook these educational opportunities, whereas an entirely permissive approach may fail to address genuine risks. A more comprehensive strategy combines ethical guidance, clear expectations, positive digital examples, and opportunities for students to develop independent judgement.

Consequently, the relationship between religious culture and social media should be understood as an area of educational mediation. Institutional culture provides the values through which students evaluate digital experiences, while digital literacy helps them apply those values to contemporary situations. The effectiveness of this relationship depends on whether students can translate general religious principles into specific decisions concerning information, communication, time management, and online conduct. This connection offers an important direction for student management in the digital era: strengthening religious identity while equipping students to participate responsibly in digital environments.

Student Experience and the Internalization of Religious Values

The success of religious culture programs ultimately depends on how students experience and interpret the educational practices implemented around them. Institutional planning may establish clear objectives, and teachers may consistently organize religious activities, but these processes do not necessarily produce identical responses among all students. Differences in motivation, prior religious experience, family background, peer relationships, and personal understanding may influence how students engage with religious routines. For this reason, students' perspectives are important for understanding not only whether programs are implemented but also how their educational meaning is constructed (Azukas et al., 2025).

Kelman's (1958) framework provides a useful analytical distinction between behavioural conformity and deeper value acceptance. Students who participate because of institutional requirements may demonstrate compliance without necessarily developing a personal commitment to the underlying values. Others may become involved because they identify with teachers, mentors, or peers whom they respect. A more internalized orientation may be reflected when students recognize the value of religious practices and seek to maintain them even when

external supervision is limited. These processes should be understood as analytical possibilities rather than fixed stages through which every student necessarily progresses (Fuentes, 2020).

The distinction has practical implications for evaluating religious education. Attendance at congregational prayer, participation in Qur'anic recitation, and compliance with expectations of politeness are observable indicators of engagement, but they cannot independently demonstrate the depth of students' religious understanding. To examine internalization more adequately, researchers need to consider students' explanations, their responses to guidance, and their conduct across different situations. Interviews can reveal how students understand the purpose of religious activities, while observations may show how they participate and interact with others. Documentary evidence can provide additional information about the institution's expectations and program implementation (Peters-Hawkins et al., 2018; Russell & Sabina, 2014).

A phenomenological perspective is particularly relevant when the research seeks to understand the meanings students and educators attach to these experiences. Rather than assuming that a religious program has the same significance for everyone, phenomenological inquiry directs attention to how participants experience institutional practices in their everyday lives. Students may perceive a routine as supportive, meaningful, repetitive, or demanding, while teachers may interpret the same activity in terms of discipline, spiritual development, or institutional responsibility. Examining these perspectives can reveal both the strengths of existing programs and the areas requiring improvement (Gates et al., 2019).

The educational implication is that students should be treated as active participants in the formation of religious culture. Their experiences can inform how activities are designed, explained, and evaluated. Opportunities for dialogue and reflection can help educators identify whether students understand the intended values, encounter difficulties in practising them, or perceive inconsistencies between institutional expectations and everyday behaviour. Such feedback does not eliminate the responsibility of educators to establish standards. Rather, it enables those standards to be communicated and implemented in ways that are more responsive to students' developmental needs (Parfitt, 2022).

Student participation may also contribute to the social sustainability of religious culture. When students encourage one another to participate positively, demonstrate respectful conduct, and share beneficial learning experiences, religious values become part of peer interaction rather than remaining exclusively teacher-directed expectations. Nevertheless, peer influence can work in different directions. A supportive peer environment may reinforce responsible conduct, whereas peer pressure or the desire for online recognition may encourage behaviour that conflicts with institutional values. Student management should therefore pay attention to the social relationships through which norms are communicated and reinforced.

Taken together, these considerations suggest that religious culture becomes more educationally meaningful when students are given opportunities not only to perform religious practices but also to understand, discuss, and apply their underlying values. The aim is not to eliminate external guidance but to connect it with the gradual development of personal responsibility. This interpretation positions student experience as an important dimension of religious culture formation and highlights the need to evaluate both institutional practices and the meanings students derive from them.

Evaluation, Supporting and Inhibiting Factors, and the Influence of Social Media

Evaluation as a Process of Continuous Improvement

Evaluation is essential to student management because it provides a basis for determining whether religious culture programs are being implemented as intended and whether they contribute to the educational objectives established by the institution. An evaluation limited to

administrative indicators, such as attendance lists or the frequency of activities, may confirm that programs have occurred but cannot fully explain their educational effectiveness. A more comprehensive approach examines implementation, student participation, the quality of educational interactions, and indications that students understand and apply the values promoted through the programs (Juliantika et al., 2024).

The distinction between implementation and outcomes is particularly important. A program may be implemented consistently while its effects vary among students. Some students may participate actively and understand the intended values, whereas others may comply primarily because of institutional requirements. Evaluation should therefore distinguish between process indicators and developmental indicators. Process indicators include program continuity, role allocation, attendance, and the consistency of implementation. Developmental indicators may include students' explanations of religious values, their willingness to act responsibly, their treatment of others, and their capacity to make appropriate decisions in situations that require independent judgement. These indicators should be interpreted cautiously, because no single behaviour provides conclusive evidence of internalized religious commitment (Sunhaji et al., 2025).

Schein's (2010) organizational culture framework reinforces the importance of examining the relationship between visible practices and deeper assumptions. If religious activities are consistently organized but students perceive them as unrelated to their personal lives, the institution may need to reconsider how their meaning is communicated. Similarly, if the institution emphasizes politeness but everyday interactions are characterized by humiliation or inconsistent treatment, the discrepancy between stated values and experienced practices may weaken the credibility of its religious culture. Evaluation should therefore include attention to the educational climate and the consistency between institutional messages and actual conduct (Sunhaji et al., 2025).

The evaluation process can also be understood as a feedback mechanism within the management cycle. Information gathered from teachers, students, observations, and institutional documents can inform decisions about program design, teacher support, scheduling, communication, and digital guidance. For example, if the evidence indicates that students struggle to maintain attention because of competing digital activities, the response should not automatically be limited to stricter prohibitions. The institution may also need to explore time-management guidance, classroom engagement, family communication, or strategies for developing self-regulation. The appropriate response depends on what the evidence actually demonstrates (Solihah et al., 2024).

Triangulation is important in this process because different sources may reveal different aspects of implementation. Teachers can explain the objectives and challenges of a program, students can describe their experiences, observations can document actual practices, and institutional documents can establish formal expectations. Comparing these sources helps researchers distinguish between intended procedures and everyday implementation. It also reduces the risk of drawing conclusions solely from institutional claims or individual perceptions (Shavira Salsabila et al., 2024).

Thus, evaluation should function as an educational improvement process rather than merely an instrument of control. Its central purpose is to help institutions understand what is working, what requires adjustment, and how religious culture programs can respond more effectively to students' changing circumstances. This orientation supports a more reflective form of student management in which accountability and student development are treated as complementary objectives.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Strengthening Religious Culture

The development of religious culture depends on the interaction of institutional, interpersonal, and individual factors. Institutional support may include clear policies, consistent leadership, adequate facilities, scheduled activities, and coordination among educators. Interpersonal support may emerge through positive teacher-student relationships, teacher role modelling, constructive communication, and peer encouragement. At the individual level, students' motivation, understanding, habits, and capacity for self-regulation may influence how they respond to religious programs. These factors should be examined as interconnected dimensions rather than as independent variables.

Leadership is important because it establishes priorities and influences whether religious culture is treated as a shared educational responsibility. When leaders communicate clear objectives and support consistent implementation, teachers are better positioned to connect classroom practices with broader institutional expectations. However, policy statements alone are insufficient. Their influence depends on how expectations are translated into daily routines, whether educators understand their responsibilities, and whether the institution provides opportunities to discuss implementation difficulties.

Teacher commitment and competence are also significant. Teachers are responsible not only for delivering religious knowledge but also for demonstrating values, providing guidance, and responding to students' behavioural challenges. Consistency across educators can reinforce institutional credibility, while conflicting approaches may create uncertainty. For instance, students may receive different messages about discipline, device use, or respectful communication if expectations are applied differently by different educators. Coordination is therefore necessary to maintain reasonable consistency without ignoring differences in students' circumstances.

Peer relationships and the wider digital environment add another dimension. Students often interpret behaviour through the responses and expectations of their social groups. A peer environment that supports learning, worship, and mutual respect can strengthen institutional efforts. Conversely, peer pressure, excessive digital engagement, or exposure to content that conflicts with educational objectives may make it more difficult for students to maintain routines and responsibilities. These influences do not determine students' behaviour automatically, but they can create conditions that either support or complicate religious development.

Individual differences also require attention. Students may vary in their prior religious knowledge, personal motivation, emotional responses, family support, and understanding of institutional rules. A uniform program can provide a common foundation, but its educational impact may differ across students. Some may respond positively to direct instruction, while others may benefit more from discussion, personal guidance, or opportunities to reflect on their experiences. Effective student management therefore combines clear institutional expectations with responsiveness to students' different needs.

These factors suggest that the effectiveness of religious culture programs cannot be attributed to a single intervention. Strong institutional leadership may be less effective when teacher practices are inconsistent; positive role modelling may have limited influence when students lack opportunities to understand and practise the values involved; and digital restrictions may provide only temporary results if students have not developed self-regulation. Conversely, coordinated management, credible role modelling, supportive peer relationships, and reflective digital education may reinforce one another. The specific contribution of each factor, however, must be established through the research data rather than assumed in advance.

Social Media and the Development of Religious Behaviour

The influence of social media on religious behaviour requires careful interpretation because digital platforms can create both educational opportunities and behavioural challenges. Students may use social media to access religious lectures, explore Islamic educational resources, maintain beneficial relationships, and share knowledge. At the same time, certain patterns of use may compete with study, interrupt daily routines, expose students to misleading information, or encourage interactions that conflict with religious and moral expectations. These possibilities indicate that the educational challenge concerns the quality, purpose, and regulation of digital engagement rather than the mere presence of social media in students' lives.

Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory helps explain why digital environments matter. Online platforms expose students to numerous behavioural models and forms of social reinforcement. Content creators, peers, and online communities can influence what students perceive as desirable, acceptable, or worthy of imitation. Likes, comments, shares, and other forms of online recognition may also reinforce particular forms of self-presentation. Nevertheless, the effects of these processes depend on how students interpret digital experiences, the beliefs they already hold, the social relationships they maintain, and their ability to regulate their own behaviour (Sunhaji et al., 2025).

From this perspective, strengthening religious culture requires more than warning students that social media can be harmful. Students need the capacity to evaluate content critically, recognize potentially misleading claims, regulate their use of time, and assess the ethical implications of online communication. Religious values can provide a moral framework for these decisions, while digital literacy supplies practical competencies for navigating digital environments. The integration of these dimensions is important because general religious knowledge does not automatically ensure that students can identify misinformation or respond appropriately to every online situation (Triansyah et al., 2023).

The relationship between social media and religious behaviour should also be examined empirically rather than treated as self-evident. Researchers need to identify the particular experiences participants report, the patterns of use they describe, and the behavioural changes they attribute to digital engagement. Where students report distraction, disrupted routines, or exposure to inappropriate content, these accounts should be analyzed alongside observations and other relevant evidence. Where students describe positive religious learning through digital platforms, these experiences should also be acknowledged. Such balanced analysis produces a more credible understanding than an approach that presumes social media is uniformly harmful.

The implications for educational management are consequently twofold. First, institutions need clear and reasonable expectations regarding digital device use in educational settings. Second, they need educational strategies that prepare students to exercise responsible judgement outside direct supervision. The first establishes boundaries, while the second develops the capacity to make decisions when external rules are absent or insufficient. Both are relevant, but neither should be assumed to be effective without examining how students respond to them (Esa Shofa Kamila Salsabila et al., 2025).

Religious culture can provide continuity between the values taught in educational institutions and the decisions students make online. For this connection to become meaningful, however, religious principles need to be translated into practical guidance concerning truthfulness, respect, responsibility, privacy, time management, and avoidance of harm. Students should be encouraged to evaluate not only whether particular content is technically accessible but also whether engaging with or sharing it is consistent with their responsibilities and values. This approach recognizes students as moral decision-makers rather than passive recipients of digital influence.

An Integrated Perspective on Student Management and Religious Culture in the Digital Era

The discussion indicates that student management, religious culture, and social media should be analyzed as interconnected dimensions of Islamic education. Student management establishes the structures, responsibilities, and processes through which educational objectives are pursued. Religious culture provides the values and shared practices that give these processes direction. Teacher role modelling and habituation create opportunities for students to observe and practise the intended behaviours, while reflective guidance and digital literacy help students apply religious values to situations beyond the immediate educational environment. Evaluation then provides feedback about whether these strategies are appropriate and how they may be improved (Ahmad Asroni, 2025).

This integrated perspective draws on the complementary contributions of Schein (2010), Bandura (1977, 1986), Kelman (1958), and Vuorikari et al. (2022). Schein helps explain how institutional practices relate to stated values and deeper cultural assumptions. Bandura clarifies the importance of behavioural models, social environments, and self-regulation. Kelman provides a framework for distinguishing compliance from identification and internalization. DigComp 2.2 adds a practical perspective on digital competence, including the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to participate responsibly in digital environments. Together, these perspectives help explain why religious culture cannot be strengthened solely through the scheduling of activities or the enforcement of rules (Cukup Islamiarso et al., 2026).

The central analytical proposition is that institutional consistency creates the conditions for religious development, but students' understanding and participation remain essential to the process. A well-organized program can provide regular opportunities for practice; credible educators can demonstrate the intended values; and constructive guidance can help students interpret the significance of their experiences. Responsible digital education can then extend these values into online settings, while evaluation identifies gaps between institutional intentions and students' actual experiences. This proposition should be understood as an analytical framework to be examined against the study's empirical evidence, not as a causal conclusion established independently of the data (Fadhillah et al., 2025).

The contribution of this perspective lies in connecting educational management with the formation of religious culture and the challenges of digital participation. Rather than treating religious routines, student discipline, and social media use as separate issues, the framework places them within a shared educational process. It also emphasizes that religious culture should not be evaluated only by the visible regularity of activities. A more comprehensive assessment considers the quality of institutional implementation, the credibility of teacher role modelling, students' understanding of religious values, their ability to regulate their behaviour, and their capacity to apply ethical principles in digital contexts.

Ultimately, strengthening religious culture in the digital era requires an educational environment in which institutional expectations, educator behaviour, student experiences, and digital guidance reinforce one another. The objective is not simply to protect students from negative influences but to prepare them to respond to complex situations with religious understanding, critical judgement, and personal responsibility. The extent to which the institution examined in this study achieves these objectives must be demonstrated through the evidence obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. When supported by such evidence, the integrated perspective developed here can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of student management in Islamic education.

Conclusion (خاتمة)

Strengthening religious culture in Islamic educational institutions requires an educational commitment that extends beyond the implementation of routine religious activities. Its long-term significance lies in the institution's capacity to cultivate an environment in which religious values become meaningful foundations for students' decisions, relationships, and personal responsibilities. Student management therefore needs to bridge institutional objectives and students' lived experiences by fostering consistency, meaningful participation, and opportunities for reflection. In this regard, the development of religious character is best understood as a continuous educational process that involves institutional commitment, credible educational role models, and students' active engagement in interpreting and practising religious values.

In the context of increasingly pervasive social media, the sustainability of religious culture also depends on students' capacity to exercise ethical judgement and self-regulation beyond the boundaries of formal educational supervision. Islamic educational institutions are consequently challenged not only to maintain religious traditions but also to prepare students to navigate digital environments critically, responsibly, and in accordance with Islamic values. The central implication of this study is that religious education and digital competence should be developed as complementary dimensions of student formation rather than as separate concerns. By connecting institutional management with reflective religious learning and responsible digital participation, educational institutions can pursue a more holistic approach to character development that prepares students to preserve their religious commitments while engaging constructively with the complexities of contemporary society.

Acknowledgment (شكر وتقدير)

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to the first and second supervisors for their valuable guidance, constructive feedback, and continuous support throughout this research. Appreciation is also extended to the Institut Agama Islam An-Nawawi Purworejo, Indonesia, for its academic support and research facilitation.

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