



## Enhancing Student Religiosity Through Islamic Content and Influencer Expertise: Social Media Contribution as Mediator

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### Abstract

The rise of social media has altered how young Muslims learn about their faith, but the effect on their everyday religious practices is unclear. To comprehend how Islamic content and influencers impact religious practices, this study makes use of the Social Learning Theory and the Uses and Gratifications Theory. It also examines social media contribution as a potential link in the chain. 180 Muslim students from 13 faculties at the University of Mulawarman were given a structured questionnaire as part of a quantitative study. Purposive sampling was used to choose respondents, considering the population's infinite size and two particular requirements: frequent interaction with Muslim influencers and Islamic content on social media and active use of social media. Data were gathered using adapted instruments from earlier research, and PLS-SEM was used for analysis. The findings demonstrate that the quality of Islamic content significantly influences religiosity practices both directly and indirectly (through social media contribution). The practice of religiosity is not directly impacted by Muslim influencer expertise, but it does have a notable indirect impact through social media contributions. These results emphasize how crucial interactive engagement and high-quality Islamic teachings are in promoting religious behavior. These findings highlight the importance of high-quality Islamic teachings and interactive engagement in encouraging religious behavior. The study offers helpful insights for Islamic education by highlighting the need for relatable, reliable content and influencers who can promote value-driven engagement. It enables us to comprehend how youth religiosity is shaped by digital spaces and how structured online interaction can reinforce it.

**Keywords:** Islamic content quality, muslim influencer expertise, religiosity practice, social media contribution

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## **A. Introduction**

In the digital era, religious education manifests itself outside of the conventional classroom, books, and sermons. Muslim students regularly engage with their faith and develop their spiritual identities on social media. People post real, captivating, and intensely personal Islamic messages on TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. Digital interactions have changed the way young Muslims learn, think, and share their faith. Zaid et al. (2022) assert that Muslim influencers play a crucial role in aiding their followers in comprehending religious significance. Dalayli (2023) discusses the utilization of interactive web content by Gen Z to engage with their faith.

This alteration extends the boundaries of conventional curricula in religious educational institutions. Research indicates that informal digital environments, particularly social media, significantly influence students' religiosity, comparable to the effects of formal education. Nada et al. (2025) discuss the role of peer interaction and Akidah Akhlak education in the development of religious character. Mangestuti & Aziz (2023) demonstrate that the school climate and curriculum influence the internalization of values. Nasution (2024) asserts the necessity of comprehending these effects in conjunction with students' online sharing practices. Social media facilitates simultaneous formal and informal learning. Religious formation may occur within classroom settings and across a temporal framework (Sagran & Shariffadeen, 2023).

An increasing body of research examines the impact of online engagement on the religious practices of Muslim students. Anwar et al. (2024) assert that religious material influences the lives of Muslims in urban settings, while Widiana et al. (2024) indicate that social media facilitates a deeper understanding of beliefs through interpersonal engagement. According to Purba Br et al. (2024), students construct their religious identity through online self-expression. However, these benefits do not consistently occur. Certain studies express concern regarding individuals' inadequate comprehension of religion and the negative consequences that may arise online (Nasution et al., 2021). According to other studies, digital da'wah may strengthen people's bonds with others and their faith (Rahmawati et al., 2025). Joanly et al. (2023) stress that followers' responses and engagement are greatly influenced by the legitimacy of religious leaders.

Even with the advent of these novel ideas, little research has been done on two important topics: the perceived quality of Islamic content and the degree of expertise held by Muslim influencers. Additionally, not much research has looked at the connection between students' online experiences and their offline actions and how they engage with religious content on social media, including likes, comments, and shares. It is essential to comprehend this process, especially since religious expression depends more and more on digital interactions. This study examines the impact of Islamic content quality and the expertise of Muslim influencers on students' religious practices, with social media serving as a mediating factor in this relationship.

## **B. Literature Review**

### **1. Religiosity**

In the Islamic context, religiosity encompasses the integration of belief, practice, and ethical behavior within daily life. The framework of Islam, Iman, and Ihsan is widely recognized (Ariffin et al., 2022) and is further detailed into five essential dimensions: belief, practice, experience, knowledge, and consequence (Sharma et al.,

2017). Yafiz et al. (2022) highlight its behavioral impact in both personal and social contexts, whereas Sulaiman et al. (2022) underscore the ethical obligations associated with spiritual commitment. Notwithstanding these established frameworks, recent research on religiosity in the digital era reveals significant limitations. Sagram & Shariffadeen (2023) primarily examine the duration and types of platforms utilized, neglecting the significance of user interaction. Enjang & Supandi (2025) examine the cultural dynamics of digital media in influencing Muslim identity; however, their localized focus restricts wider applicability. Ilham et al. (2025) conduct an analysis of popular da'i accounts via literature and content review, yet they do not evaluate audience internalization or responses to this content. The identified gaps indicate that religiosity should be examined not merely as a conceptual construct but also as a dynamic process influenced by interactive behaviors in digital environments.

## **2. Islamic Content Quality and Religiosity Practice**

Islamic content quality is the degree to which Islamic messages on social media are enlightening, motivating, and in line with the audience's moral and spiritual needs while providing useful guidance for day-to-day religious life (Robiansyah et al., 2025). The Social Learning Theory holds that people pick up behaviors, including religious ones like prayer, reciting the Qur'an, and supplication, by watching and eventually internalizing the teachings of reliable role models Siregar (2024). This viewpoint is supported by empirical research. Nurrahmi & Arifani (2025) found that regular exposure to Islamic preaching online results in more disciplined religious routines among students, while Syaikhu et al. (2024) found that structured Islamic content on digital platforms strengthens religious understanding. Furthermore, social media has developed into a cultural space that influences modern Muslims' religious identity and expression, according to Enjang & Supandi (2025). In this context, high-quality Islamic content is used to foster consistent religious practice in addition to providing information. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H1: Islamic content quality has a positive effect on religiosity practice.*

## **3. Muslim Influencer Expertise and Religiosity Practice**

Influencer expertise refers to the perceived degree of knowledge, credibility, and communication skills demonstrated by influencers in conveying messages on social media (Masuda et al., 2022). This perceived expertise shapes how audiences assess the trustworthiness and authority of religious content delivered online. According to the theory of religious socialization (TRS), individuals, especially youth, develop their religious identity through various social agents, including family, educational institutions, and increasingly, digital platforms (Tuna et al., 2023). Influencers play an important role as unofficial religious educators in this setting. According to Raya (2024), Indonesian celebrity preachers draw large crowds not just because of their charisma but also because of their capacity to persuasively and culturally appropriate contextualize religious teachings. In a similar vein, Zaid et al. (2022) discovered that Muslim millennials view tech-savvy influencers as substitute authorities who alter Islamic customs. Supporting this, Ilham et al. (2025) show that the expertise and presentation style of da'i and influencers on social media significantly enhance youth engagement and comprehension of Islamic teachings. In a media-saturated environment, where religious authority is increasingly negotiated online, perceived expertise becomes a key factor in fostering religious behaviors. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H2: Muslim influencer expertise has a positive effect on religiosity practice.*

#### **4. Social Media Contribution and Religiosity Practice**

Social media contribution refers to users' active involvement with religious content, such as commenting, liking, or sharing, which reflects a meaningful level of engagement with online messages (Alsiyabi et al., 2023). According to Agarwal & Jones (2022), the Uses and Gratification Theory explains how individuals use social media to fulfil spiritual needs and express religion in personalized ways beyond physical limits. Empirical findings reinforce this logic: Sagraan & Shariffadeen (2023) found that IIUM students who frequently engage with Islamic content online tend to show higher religiosity scores; Isnaeni et al. (2024) reported that social media usage significantly influences students' religious attitudes; and Rojak et al. (2022) confirmed a positive correlation between students' religious behavior and their digital engagement with faith-based content. These findings suggest that contributions to Islamic content on social media may support and reinforce users' religiosity. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

*H3: Social media contribution has a positive effect on religiosity practice.*

#### **5. Islamic Content Quality and Social Media Contribution**

People actively seek out media content that satisfies their psychological, social, and informational needs, according to the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Khan et al., 2021). In this regard, user reactions are significantly influenced by the perceived quality of Islamic content, including its relevance, clarity, and moral-spiritual alignment. This opinion is supported by empirical findings: Roslan et al. (2025) found that contextualized and visually engaging da'wah strategies increase youth responsiveness; Mashudi & Hilman (2025) confirmed that digital religious education improves students' spiritual connection; and Juhaidi (2024) found that Islamic higher education institutions increase engagement by presenting structured and informative content. By adjusting to Gen Z audiences' tendency for concise, useful, and attractive content, Hidayatullah et al. (2024) successfully reached Gen Z audiences and supported these findings. Likes and comments are a natural way for users to interact with such content, demonstrating the contribution aspect of social media engagement. Consequently, the following hypothesis is put forth:

*H4: Islamic content quality has a positive effect on social media contribution.*

#### **6. Muslim Influencer Expertise and Social Media Contribution**

Based on the Source Credibility Theory (SCT) from Yusuf & Muktar (2025), an influencer's perceived expertise significantly shapes audience engagement. This expertise is exhibited by Muslim influencers' profound comprehension of Islamic principles and their ability to produce content that is both factual and pertinent to society. According to empirical research by Wasike (2023), Ao et al. (2023), and Saad et al. (2025), influencers who are seen as knowledgeable typically encourage higher levels of engagement, especially in the form of likes, comments, and shares. Safitri & Tari (2025) highlight that users are more likely to contribute when influencers demonstrate strong ability in delivering content accurately and meaningfully. Muslim influencers who are perceived as capable of delivering religious content clearly and relevantly are more likely to encourage greater social media contribution from their audience.

*H5: Muslim influencer expertise positively influences social media contribution.*

## **7. Social Media Contribution as Mediator**

Based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework (Nasution, 2024), Islamic content quality and Muslim influencer expertise serve as external stimuli that trigger internal cognitive and emotional processes. In this model, social media contribution, such as liking and commenting, functions as the organism's internal processing that mediates the behavioral outcome, namely, religiosity practice. This mechanism clarifies why the functional relationships between high-quality content and influencer credibility are more likely to foster religious behaviors. Empirical evidence aligns with this: Minarti et al. (2023) and Ali et al. (2024) found that digital Islamic engagement supports reflection and practice. Zaid et al. (2022) further argue that Islam on digital platforms is shifting toward personal, participatory forms embedded in digital culture. Contribution behaviors reinforce this shift by enabling users to internalize values through interactive affirmation. As Müller & Friemel (2024) highlight, active media engagement deepens meaning construction, especially when aligned with identity. Thus, student interaction through likes and comments supports value internalization, encouraging alignment with practiced religiosity. We therefore hypothesize:

*H6: Social media contribution mediates the effect of Islamic content quality on religiosity practice.*

*H7: Social media contribution mediates the effect of Muslim influencer expertise on religiosity practice.*

## **C. Method**

### **1. Research Design and Participants**

Following Creswell's recommendations, a correlational research design was used to investigate the direction and strength of associations between variables without changing them. To gather the necessary data, the study employed a structured questionnaire survey, which is renowned for obtaining the same responses from a large number of respondents (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). It is simpler to compare statistics, and the results are more trustworthy and dependable when standardized measurement tools are used in the questionnaire format. Participants were undergraduate students from the University of Mulawarman. They were a varied group of students from 13 different faculties. Students enrolled between 2020 and 2022 who were active on social media and followed Muslim influencers and their Islamic content met the participation requirements. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that the sample was pertinent to the objectives of the study. Referring to Hair et al. (2019), the minimum sample size recommendation for structural equation modelling is ten times the number of structural paths or parameters estimated in this study, 18 resulting in a required minimum of 180 respondents.

### **2. Instruments**

This study employed a structured set of instruments to measure four key variables, adapted from previously validated sources. Islamic Content Quality (5 items) was adapted from Robiansyah et al. (2025), Muslim Influencer Expertise (4 items) from Masuda et al. (2022), Social Media Contribution (6 items) from Schivinski et al. (2016) and Shang et al. (2022), and Religiosity Practice (3 items) from Sharma et al. (2017). All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," and were evaluated for validity and reliability through outer loadings, AVE, Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite Reliability within the PLS-SEM framework.

**Table 1. Research Instruments**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Sources</b>
Islamic Content Quality	Moral messages	ICQ1	Robiansyah et al. (2025)
	Personal importance	ICQ2	
	Comprehensive teachings	ICQ3	
	Faith connection	ICQ4	
	Balance: worldly-spiritual	ICQ5	
Muslim Influencer Expertise	Knowledgeable	MIE1	Masuda et al. (2022)
	Competent	MIE2	
	Mastery in the field	MIE3	
	Experienced authority	MIE4	
Social Media Contribution	Comment on videos	COT1	Schivinski et al. (2016); Shang et al. (2022)
	Comment on posts	COT2	
	Comment on graphics	COT3	
	Share posts	COT4	
	Like graphics	COT5	
	Like posts	COT6	
Religiosity Practice	Engage in Dua'a	RP1	Sharma et al. (2017)
	Pray five times a day	RP2	
	Read the Qur'an	RP3	

### 3. Data Analysis Techniques

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used in this study to examine the proposed connections between latent constructs. Two steps were taken in the analytical process: first, the measurement model was evaluated, and then the structural model was evaluated. All instruments were adapted from validated sources, and their validity and reliability were examined using the collected survey data. The measurement model was tested for indicator reliability (outer loadings), internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability), convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted), and discriminant validity (cross-loadings and HTMT ratios), following the criteria established by Hair & Alamer (2022), Legate et al. (2023), and Sarstedt et al. (2021). Items with loadings below 0.70 were reviewed, and those under 0.60 were considered for removal based on theoretical relevance and construct coverage. The structural model was then tested to assess hypothesized relationships using path coefficients and model fit indices, including SRMR, NFI, d\_ULS, and d\_G (Dash & Paul, 2021). Mediation analysis was also conducted following Sarstedt & Moisesescu (2024). The model met acceptable standards of validity and fit, and most hypotheses were supported as discussed in the findings section.

## D. Findings

### 1. Characteristic of the Respondents

The respondent profile showed that 33.89% of the sample was male and 66.11% was female. Just 6.67% of the population was under the age of 17, whereas the majority (58.89%) were between the ages of 19 and 20, and the next-oldest (34.44%) were 21 and older. According to these figures, undergraduates made up the majority of participants. Students came from a variety of faculties, according to an analysis of their academic backgrounds. The largest percentage of responders (16.11%) came from the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Science, followed by Economics

and Business (13.89%). Engineering, medicine, forestry, mathematics and natural sciences, fisheries and marine science, and social and political science were among the other faculties that contributed 7.22%. 2021 had the largest cohort for the academic year (40.56%), followed by 2020 (31.11%) and 2022 (28.33%).

**Table 2. Respondents' Characteristics**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Gender	Male	61	33.89
	Female	119	66.11
Age	17-18	12	6.67
	19-20	62	34.44
	≥ 21	106	58.89
Faculty	Teacher Training and Education Science	29	16.11
	Economics and Business	25	13.89
	Engineering	13	7.22
	Medical	13	7.22
	Fisheries and Marine Science	13	7.22
	Mathematics and Natural Sciences	13	7.22
	Forestry	13	7.22
	Social and Political Science	13	7.22
	Agricultural	12	6.67
	Pharmacy	11	6.11
	Cultural Science	10	5.56
	Public Health	9	5.00
	Law	6	3.33
Enrollment Year	2020	31.11	31.11
	2021	40.56	40.56
	2022	28.33	28.33

## 2. Social Media and Muslim Influencer Profile

According to research on how respondents used social media to access Islamic content, Instagram was the most popular platform (40.25%), followed by TikTok (31.78%) and YouTube (27.97%). Pictures (9.86%) and written formats like articles or short stories (4.23%) were mentioned less frequently than video-based content, which was preferred by the vast majority (85.91%). Themes that were most often accessed were Hadith of the Prophet (30.14%), Morality and Soul Purification (32.54%), and Faith and Islamic Thought (37.32%). These findings show that when interacting with Islamic teachings on social media, respondents strongly prefer dynamic and visual content.

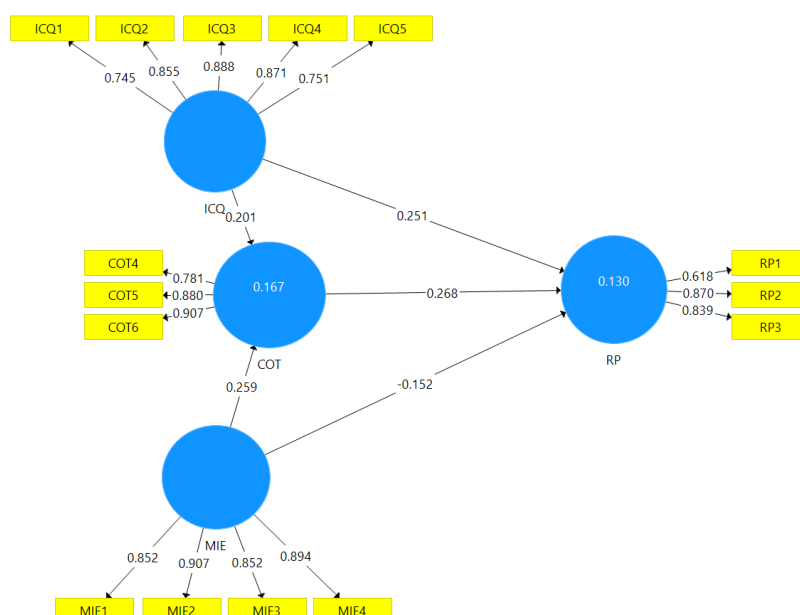
The majority of respondents (61.90%) cite preachers like ustadz, kyai, or mubaligh as their main source of religious inspiration on social media, according to an analysis of the types of Muslim influencers they prefer. Motivators, such as coaches, trainers, or public speakers who present Islamic teachings through a motivational lens, come in second (26.20%). The remaining 11.90% lean toward other influencer categories, including writers, professionals, and artists. These results imply that although traditional religious leaders continue to hold sway, influencers who convey Islamic principles in contemporary, motivational, and approachable ways are also highly valued (see Table 3).

**Table 3. Social Media and The Influencers**

Types	Total Mentioned	Percentage
Instagram	95	40.25
Tiktok	75	31.78
Youtube	66	27.97
Video (shorts, stories, reels)	122	85.91
Picture (poster, flyer, quote)	14	9.86
Writing (article, short story)	6	4.23
Faith & Islamic Thought	78	37.32
Morality & Soul Purification	68	32.54
Hadith of the Prophet	63	30.14
Preacher (Ustadz, Kyai, Mubaligh)	52	61.90
Motivator (Trainer, Speaker, Coach)	22	26.20
Others (Artist, Professional, Writer)	10	11.90

### 3. PLS-SEM Analysis: Evaluation of Outer Model

In order to assess measurement quality and ascertain construct validity, two crucial metrics are Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and outer loading. According to Legate et al. (2023), an indicator is considered to have good convergent validity if it has an outer loading value of at least 0.70 and makes a significant contribution to the latent construct being measured. Additionally, a construct should, on average, explain more than half of the variance of its observable indicators if its AVE value is  $\geq 0.50$ . Three indicators under the study's Social Media Contribution variable, COT1 (0.488), COT2 (0.506), and COT3 (0.548), were removed from the measurement model because they did not sufficiently contribute to the latent construct and instead dropped below the outer loading threshold.

**Figure 1. Evaluation of Measurement Model**

However, one indicator, RP1 (0.618) under the Religiosity Practice variable, with an outer loading below 0.70, was kept. According to Hair & Alamer (2022), indicators with loadings ranging from 0.40 to 0.70 might still be deemed appropriate

if the corresponding construct has an AVE value greater than 0.50. In this instance, the Religiosity Practice construct met the requirements for convergent validity with an AVE of 0.614. As a result, even though RP1 contributes less than other indicators, it is still appropriate to include it in the measurement model.

**Table 4. Validity Test**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Outer Loading</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Result</b>
Islamic Content Quality	ICQ1	0.745	0.680	Valid
	ICQ2	0.855		Valid
	ICQ3	0.888		Valid
	ICQ4	0.871		Valid
	ICQ5	0.751		Valid
Muslim Influencer Expertise	MIE1	0.852	0.768	Valid
	MIE2	0.907		Valid
	MIE3	0.852		Valid
	MIE4	0.894		Valid
Social Media Contribution	COT4	0.781	0.736	Valid
	COT5	0.880		Valid
	COT6	0.907		Valid
Religiosity Practice	RP1	0.618	0.614	Valid
	RP2	0.870		Valid
	RP3	0.839		Valid

All of the model's constructs show satisfactory discriminant validity, according to the results shown in the discriminant validity table using the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait) ratio. Legate et al. (2023) state that to verify that two constructs are empirically distinct from one another, the HTMT value between them should not be greater than 0.85. All of the HTMT values in this study fall well below the suggested threshold, ranging from 0.120 to 0.639. This supports the discriminant validity of the model by showing that each construct, Islamic Content Quality (ICQ), Muslim Influencer Expertise (MIE), Social Media Contribution (COT), and Religiosity Practice (RP), is conceptually and empirically distinct.

**Table 5. Discriminant Validity (HTMT Ratio-Criteria)**

	<b>ICQ</b>	<b>MIE</b>	<b>COT</b>	<b>RP</b>
<b>ICQ</b>				
<b>MIE</b>	0.639			
<b>COT</b>	0.396	0.413		
<b>RP</b>	0.324	0.120	0.377	

According to the Fornell-Larcker criteria for discriminant validity, all of the model's constructs meet the requirements for discriminant validity. When the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which is represented by the diagonal values in the table, is higher than the correlations between the construct and any other construct in the model, discriminant validity is demonstrated, as advised by Cheung et al. (2024). Here, the diagonal values of all the constructs, Islamic Content Quality (0.824), Muslim Influencer Expertise (0.877), Social Media Contribution (0.858), and Religiosity Practice (0.784), exceed the corresponding inter-construct correlations. These results support the discriminant validity of the model by confirming that each

construct is empirically distinct and captures more variance from its indicators than from other constructs.

**Table 6. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criteria)**

	ICQ	MIE	COT	RP
ICQ	<b>0.824</b>			
MIE	0.579	<b>0.877</b>		
COT	0.351	0.375	<b>0.858</b>	
RP	0.257	0.094	0.299	<b>0.784</b>

The table demonstrates that all constructions have Composite Reliability (CR) values over 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency per Legate et al. (2023). The ICQ, MIE, and COT items have high Cronbach's Alpha values, indicating consistency. These findings indicate that these three ideas' instruments are statistically sound and suitable for further study. RP's Cronbach's Alpha is 0.676, just below 0.70. But its Composite Reliability is 0.824, exceeding the criteria. For an exploratory study with excellent Composite Reliability, Sarstedt et al (2021) propose Cronbach's Alpha values between 0.60 and 0.70. Because CR assesses internal consistency better than Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's Alpha is PLS-SEM's lower reliability bound, and CR its upper bound. Thus, the RP construct remains reliable as well as worthy of further investigation.

**Table 7. Reliability Test**

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Result
ICQ	0.881	0.913	Reliable
MIE	0.901	0.930	Reliable
COT	0.821	0.893	Reliable
RP	0.676	0.824	Reliable

#### 4. PLS Analysis: Evaluation of Inner Model

The table's R Square ( $R^2$ ) values show how well the structural model explains the endogenous constructs. In the context of social science research using PLS-SEM,  $R^2$  values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 can be characterized as substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively Hair & Alamer (2022). The constructs in this study, COT and RP, have respective  $R^2$  values of 0.167 and 0.130. Both values are classified as weak, indicating that only a small percentage of the variance in the corresponding endogenous variables can be explained by the exogenous constructs included in the model. These findings are still appropriate for exploratory research, where the objective is frequently to find possible relationships rather than to attain high predictive power, even though the  $R^2$  values are relatively low.

**Table 8. R Square**

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
COT	0.167	0.158
RP	0.130	0.115

Based on the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling criteria, the analysis's model fit indices indicate a high level of model quality. A fair fit between observed and projected correlation matrices was indicated by SRMR values of 0.075

for both the saturated and estimated models, which are below the acceptable cutoff of  $\leq 0.08$  Dash & Paul (2021). The Normed Fit Index (NFI) result of 0.785, which is common in exploratory models, indicates a moderate model fit, albeit slightly below the ideal level of 0.90. Additionally, the model adequacy is indicated by the discrepancy measurements  $d_{ULS}$  (0.683) and  $d_G$  (0.353). These measures are approximations, but low and non-significant values suggest that the estimated model structure closely resembles the observed data (Dash & Paul, 2021). PLS-SEM incorporates the comparative indicator chi-square (360.348) because it satisfies current reporting requirements. CB-SEM places more emphasis on it. For variance-based SEM prediction and exploration, the structural model fits well overall, according to the model fit indices.

**Table 9. Model Fit**

	<b>Saturated Model</b>	<b>Estimated Model</b>
<b>SRMR</b>	0.075	0.075
<b><math>d_{ULS}</math></b>	0.683	0.683
<b><math>d_G</math></b>	0.353	0.353
<b>Chi-Square</b>	360.348	360.348
<b>NFI</b>	0.785	0.785

Four out of five hypotheses are supported by the inner model testing using bootstrapping in SEM-PLS analysis, as indicated by t-statistics greater than 1.96 and p-values less than 0.05. With a path coefficient of 0.251 ( $t = 2.182$ ;  $p = 0.030$ ), Islamic Content Quality (ICQ) has a positive impact on Religiosity Practice (RP). Additionally, RP is positively impacted by Social Media Contribution (COT) (0.268;  $t = 2.937$ ;  $p = 0.003$ ). Furthermore, COT is significantly impacted by Muslim Influencer Expertise (MIE) ( $\beta = 0.259$ ;  $t = 3.080$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ) and ICQ ( $\beta = 0.201$ ;  $t = 2.335$ ;  $p = 0.020$ ). An inadequate t-statistic of 1.360 and a p-value of 0.175, which exceeds the 0.05 significant threshold, deny the second hypothesis, which holds that Muslim Influencer Expertise (MIE) has a positive impact on Religiosity Practice (RP). There is no statistically significant relationship between MIE and RP. These findings suggest that, in this model, social media contribution and the quality of Islamic content have a greater impact on religious practice than influencer expertise. Examining structural models supports the majority of hypothesized relationships.

**Table 10. Hypothesis Testing**

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Path Coefficient</b>	<b>t-statistic</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Result</b>
1	ICQ -> RP	0.251	2.182	0.030	Accepted
2	MIE -> RP	-0.152	1.360	0.175	Rejected
3	COT -> RP	0.268	2.937	0.003	Accepted
4	ICQ -> COT	0.201	2.335	0.020	Accepted
5	MIE -> COT	0.259	3.080	0.002	Accepted

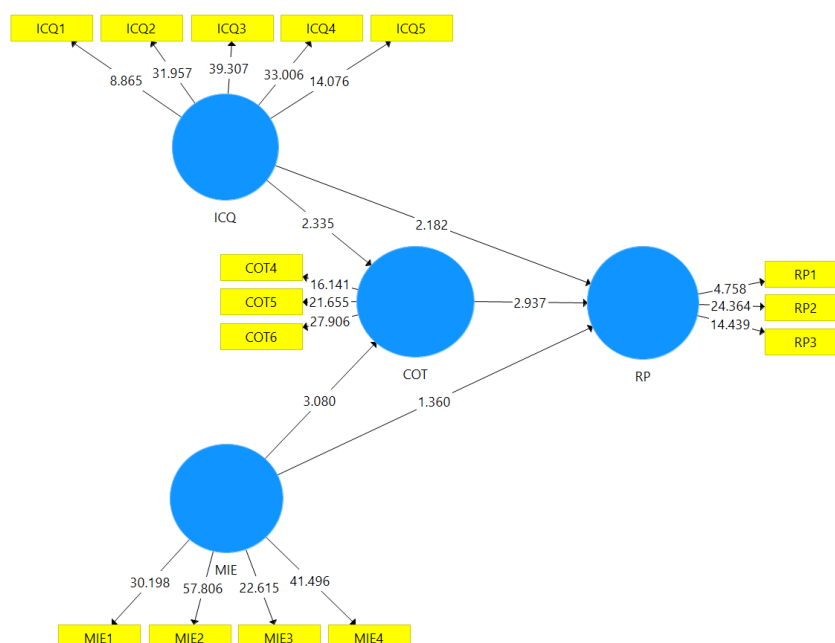
Following the results of the mediation analysis, Social Media Contribution (COT) was investigated as a mediating variable in two connections. The first hypothesis (H6) states that COT acts as a mediator in the relationship between Islamic Content Quality (ICQ) and Religiosity Practice (RP). Since the indirect effect was not statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.054$ ,  $t = 1.789$ ,  $p = 0.074$ ), this hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there was no mediation between ICQ and RP via COT, suggesting that the model's

explanatory power is not considerably increased in this direction by the inclusion of COT.

**Table 11. Mediation Effect Testing**

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	Result
6	ICQ -> COT -> RP	0.054	1.789	0.074	Rejected
7	MIE -> COT-> RP	0.069	2.281	0.023	Accepted

The second mediation hypothesis (H7) is supported by the significant mediation of the relationship between Muslim Influencer Expertise (MIE) and RP by COT ( $\beta = 0.069$ ,  $t = 2.281$ ,  $p = 0.023$ ). Previously, MIE had a negligible direct impact on RP, indicating full mediation. When the indirect effect is significant but the direct effect is not, Sarstedt & Moisescu (2024) confirm full mediation. Social media's vital role in communicating the impact of Muslim influencers on religious practice supports the mediating variable's structural significance in the model.



**Figure 2. Evaluation of Structural Model**

## E. Discussion

Supporting the Social Learning Theory (Siregar, 2024) and the idea of contribution as social media engagement (Alsiyabi et al., 2023), Islamic content quality (H1) and social media contribution (H3) have a significant and positive impact on religiosity practice. These findings are consistent with recent research by Syaikh et al. (2024), Isnaeni et al. (2024), and Rojak et al. (2022), which shows that high-quality Islamic messages and active user interactions, likes, and comments are important factors in the internalization of religiosity. Pupils are more likely to apply the subject to their religion if they find it engaging and pertinent. However, religiosity was not directly impacted by Muslim influencer expertise (H2). The result that supports Hypothesis 2 goes against what Ilham et al. (2025), Zaid et al. (2022), and Raya (2024) found, which said that perceived influencer expertise does not directly

affect religious behavior. The consequences of this indirect influence are examined in later mediation effect discussions.

The investigation also showed that Islamic content quality (H4) and Muslim influencer expertise (H5) favorably affect social media contribution. These results support Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), which holds that audiences actively seek content that fits their cognitive and affective requirements (Khan et al., 2021). Clear, relevant, and inspirational Islamic content motivates students to like and remark, according to Juhaidi (2024), Roslan et al. (2025), and Mashudi & Hilman (2025). Influencers perceived as competent in conveying Islamic teachings tend to generate more contribution behavior from their followers, consistent with Cabiles' view of social interaction patterns and empirical support from Sagraan & Shariffadeen (2023), Isnaeni et al. (2024), and Rojak et al. (2022). These engaging acts show respect and help pupils internalize ideals before practicing religion. The power of material and influencers to encourage participation emphasizes the importance of engagement as a link between digital exposure and religious expression.

H6 was rejected in mediation analysis; however, H7 was supported. In particular, social media contribution significantly mediated the effect of Muslim influencer knowledge on religiosity practice but not on Islamic content quality. H7's confirmation fits the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework (Nasution, 2024), where Muslim influencers' credibility and communication skills (stimuli) stimulate internal engagement (organism), leading users to contribute on social media (likes, comments), which reinforces their religious practices. This supports Müller & Friemel (2024) that online engagement shapes internal values and actions. Zaid et al. (2022) also note that mediatization allows audiences to construct religious meaning through interaction rather than institutional education. The rejection of H6 implies that Islamic information alone, without a compelling human source (influencer), may not be enough to convert consumers into religious contributors. This emphasizes the relevance of human agency in digital religious communication, where content credibility may depend on the deliverer's integrity and skill.

These findings extend Social Learning Theory (Siregar, 2024) and enrich Uses and Gratifications Theory (Khan et al., 2021) in participatory online settings by highlighting social media contribution as a key mediating mechanism that links digital religious exposure to actual religiosity practice. As noted by Ilham et al. (2025) and Zaid (2022), this study also highlights the importance of delivering high-quality Islamic content and improving the expertise of Muslim influencers. These results make clear how participatory behavior and the reliability of information enhance religiosity in online settings.

## **F. Conclusion**

This study advances our knowledge of how students' practices of religiosity in the digital age are influenced by the calibre of Islamic content and influencer expertise, as mediated by social media contribution. By applying Social Learning Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory to participatory digital contexts, it advances theory while practically highlighting the necessity of reliable, captivating religious content and adept digital communication by Muslim educators and influencers. In order to improve students' internalization of religious values, educators in particular, are urged to modify Islamic learning environments by incorporating digital literacy, content evaluation techniques, and media engagement tactics. However, the study's cross-sectional design, geographically limited sample,

and reliance on self-reported data limit its generalizability. To gain a deeper understanding of online religious behavior, future studies should take a longitudinal approach and investigate other mediators like peer influence, emotional connection, and trust.

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