

The Effect of Using the Instagram Application on the Learning Outcomes of *Aqidah Akhlak* Subjects

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Abstract

This study explores the under-researched role of social media, specifically Instagram in the learning of *Aqidah Akhlak*, a core component of Islamic education, and its impact on student learning outcomes and character development. The research focuses on 8th-grade students at Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta during the 2024/2025 academic year. Employing a quantitative correlational survey design, the study involved 60 students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire on Instagram usage and documented learning outcomes, then analyzed using simple linear regression with SPSS version 25. The results reveal a very strong positive correlation between Instagram use and *Aqidah Akhlak* learning outcomes ($r = 0.901$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that Instagram, when used constructively, can serve as an effective learning medium. This aligns with constructivist, connectivist, and social learning theories that highlight the value of interactive digital experiences and networked learning environments. However, the study also cautions against excessive use, which may lead to distraction. Theoretical implications include the expansion of literature on social media-based Islamic education, while practical implications point to the need for schools and educators to incorporate Islamic digital literacy into curriculum design. The study also opens avenues for further research using experimental or mixed-method approaches to investigate motivational factors and the internalization of moral values through social media platforms.

Keywords: Instagram; Learning Outcomes; *Aqidah Akhlak*; Social Media; Islamic Education

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology today has had a major influence on the world of education, especially in the use of social media as a learning tool (Hakim & Yulia, 2024; R. A. Putri, 2023). Instagram, which was initially better known as a photo and video sharing platform, is now being used by educators and students as an alternative media to support the learning process (Satrianingsih et al., 2023). The use of this media is considered to be able to increase students' interest, engagement and attraction to the material being taught. However, there have not been many studies that deeply highlight the effectiveness of social media, especially Instagram, in relation to student learning outcomes.

Islamic religious education has a fundamental role in shaping students' character, morals and spirituality (Anwar, 2016; Pujianti, 2024). One of the main challenges faced by *Aqidah Akhlak* teachers is how to convey normative material to remain relevant to students' modern lives. The use of Instagram as a learning media is expected to bridge the gap between the need for contextualized learning and students' interest in digital media.

This phenomenon is increasingly attracting attention because the current generation, especially high school students, are very close to the use of social media. They are more responsive to interactive visual content and tend to prefer ways of learning that utilize technology to provide a more interactive experience than the lecture method (Supriadi et al., 2022). If social media is utilized appropriately, Instagram can be an effective tool in conveying *Aqidah Akhlak* values that become more interesting. However, the use of social media also carries risks. Not all Instagram content is in accordance with the value of Islamic education, in fact, most of it contains distractions that can reduce students' learning concentration. Therefore, it is important to examine the extent to which Instagram can really have a positive impact on *Aqidah Akhlak* learning outcomes.

The researcher's response to this phenomenon is that social media, especially Instagram, should not be viewed solely as entertainment, but can be integrated as a creative learning strategy. This research is here to provide empirical evidence regarding the

effectiveness of Instagram in improving Aqidah Akhlak learning outcomes, so that it can be a reference for teachers in designing more innovative learning.

Some previous studies such as research by Khasana et al. (2020), Gunawan & Alfurqan (2024), and Putri et al. (2025) highlighted the use of social media in learning, but the focus was more on general subjects such as Mathematics, Indonesian, English, or Social Studies. Meanwhile, studies that discuss the utilization of Instagram in Aqidah Akhlak subjects are still very limited. This creates an important research gap to be filled so that Islamic religious education learning is more adaptive to technological developments. Previous studies have emphasized more on the aspects of motivation and interest in learning, not many have highlighted real learning outcomes. Therefore, this study seeks to contribute by measuring the effect of using Instagram not only in terms of student interest, but also on academic achievement in the subject of Aqidah Akhlak.

The novelty of this research lies in its approach that not only examines the role of Instagram as an entertainment medium, but also integrates it as an effective learning medium for Islamic religious education. With a focus on the subject of Aqidah Akhlak, this research offers a new perspective on how to package Islamic material with a visual-interactive approach that is close to students' daily lives. This research also combines analysis between cognitive and affective aspects. This means that the research does not only measure the impact of using Instagram on student learning outcomes academically, but also on the understanding and internalization of moral values contained in the learning material.

Constructivism learning theory states that effective learning occurs when students construct their own understanding through direct experience and interaction with the environment (Y. R. Salsabila & Muqowim, 2024; Sugrah, 2019). Instagram with its visual characteristics can be a constructive tool in helping students understand the abstract concepts of Aqidah Akhlak. Furthermore, the theory of connectivism proposed by Siemens (2005) emphasizes that knowledge is spread in networks, and learning occurs when individuals are able to connect information from various sources (A. Salsabila et al., 2025; Wijaksono & Adnyana, 2024). Instagram as a digital media allows students to connect with various Islamic content relevant to learning. Learning media theory as well as findings from Heinich et al. (2002) and Biantoro (2024) explain that media serves as an intermediary to increase learning effectiveness. By utilizing Instagram, teachers can package Aqidah Akhlak

material to be more interactive, contextual, and in accordance with the characteristics of students.

This study aims to analyze the effect of using Instagram as a learning media on students' Aqidah Akhlak learning outcomes, both from the cognitive and affective aspects, so as to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of social media in Islamic religious education. The problem formulations in this study are: 1) How is the use of Instagram in class VIII students of SMP Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta? 2) How is the social morality of 8th grade students of Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta? 3) How does the use of Instagram affect the social morals of eighth grade students at Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta?

METHODS

This type of research is quantitative research with a correlational approach. Quantitative research is used because it aims to test the relationship between variables with data in the form of numbers that can be analyzed statistically (Sugiyono, 2019). The correlational approach was chosen because this research not only describes the phenomenon, but also tests the extent to which the use of Instagram as an independent variable (X) is related to Aqidah Akhlak learning outcomes as the dependent variable (Y). This approach is relevant to similar studies that emphasize the analysis of the relationship between educational variables with digital media (Arikunto, 2019).

The research design used is a correlational survey design. This design was chosen because researchers try to measure the effect of the level of intensity of Instagram use on student learning outcomes without providing direct treatment as in experiments. With this design, data is obtained through questionnaire instruments and documentation of academic grades, allowing for objective analysis of relationships (Creswell, 2014). The correlational design is also appropriate for examining contemporary educational phenomena that are influenced by external factors such as technology and social media.

The participants of this study were all VIII grade students of Al Abidin Junior High School Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta in the academic year 2024/2025, totaling 60 students, consisting of two classes. From this population, the researcher took samples using purposive sampling technique, namely choosing the class that most intensively uses Instagram according to research needs (Sugiyono, 2019). Based on the pre-observation

results, the researcher determined the Special VIII 1 class consisting of 30 students as the research sample. This technique was chosen to make the data obtained more representative by focusing on groups that are relevant to the research variables.

The research instruments consisted of questionnaires and grade documentation. The questionnaire was used to measure the intensity of Instagram use, including frequency, duration, purpose, and student activities on the platform. The questionnaire instrument was arranged in the form of a Likert scale with four answer options. Before use, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability, with the results of the reliability test showing a Cronbach's Alpha value of >0.80 which indicates high internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In addition, data on student learning outcomes were obtained through documentation of Aqidah Akhlak subject grades in the current semester. The data collection technique was carried out through distributing questionnaires to students and recording official grades from the school (Sugiyono, 2019).

The collected data were analyzed using simple regression analysis to determine the effect between the independent variable (Instagram usage) and the dependent variable (Aqidah Akhlak learning outcomes). Prerequisite tests for analysis were carried out first, including tests of normality, linearity, and heteroscedasticity so that the data met statistical assumptions (Ghozali, 2018). In addition, the results of the analysis are complemented by the interpretation of the coefficient of determination (R^2) to see how much influence the independent variable has on the dependent variable. Data analysis was carried out using the help of SPSS version 25 software, which is a general statistical software in social and educational research (Hair et al., 2022).

RESULTS

This study involved 60 students in class VIII of Al Abidin Junior High School Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta (class A and B 30 students each). Based on the questionnaire, the majority of students use Instagram every day with a duration of 1-3 hours (medium category). Students with high usage intensity tend to have lower grades in the Aqidah Akhlak subject compared to those with low or moderate intensity.

The average student score was 80, but Pearson correlation analysis showed a significant negative relationship between the intensity of Instagram use and the learning outcomes of aqidah akhlak ($r = -0.45$). This means that the more often Instagram is used

excessively, the lower the students' learning outcomes. Some students also admitted that they were distracted in learning because of notifications and distractions from Instagram. Even so, there are also those who use Instagram for Islamic content that supports the understanding of moral values.

In general, the use of Instagram affects learning outcomes. If used wisely, this social media can be beneficial. However, if used excessively, it can have a negative impact on academic performance.

The following is a graph showing the relationship between the intensity of Instagram use and the average grade of the Aqidah Akhlak subject, provided that the blue bar shows the number of students in each category of use and the red line shows the average grade of the lesson in each category, the graph can be seen in Figure 1 below;

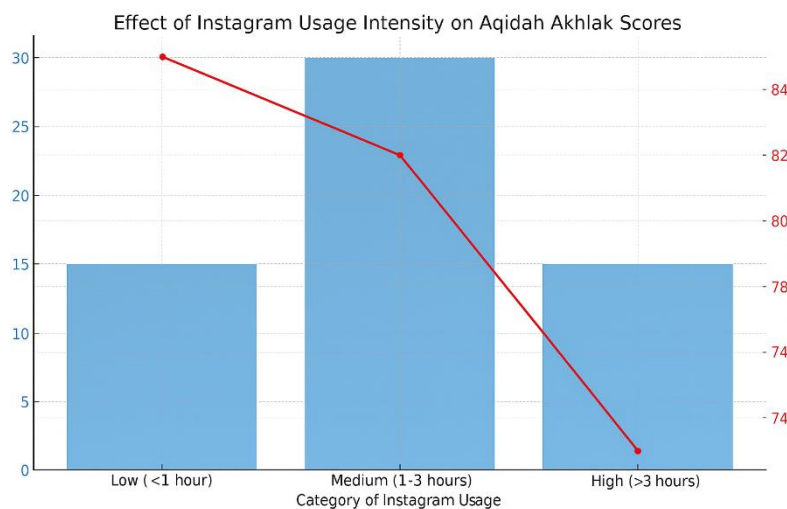


Figure 1. Diagram of the Effect of Instagram usage intensity on Aqidah Akhlak scores

Analysis Prerequisite Testing

There are two types of research given by SMP Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta students which include the use of the Instagram application (X) with a questionnaire or questionnaire method consisting of 20 items and the learning outcomes of akidah akhlak (Y) with the assessment method from the report card results.

The results of Aiken's validity of the questionnaire on the use of the Instagram application (X), it can be seen that there are 20 questions that have a value of $V > 0.6$, which means that the question can be said to be valid. However, if the value of $V < 0.6$ then the

question is said to be less valid / invalid. There is 1 question that is said to be less valid / invalid.

The reliability test in this study used the help of SPSS computer software using the Chornbach Alpha model. According to Well and Wollack in Subando (2020: 105) states that the instrument is said to be reliable if the Chornbach Alpha value is more than 0.7.

The reliability test is carried out to determine the extent to which the research instrument provides consistent results when measured repeatedly. The calculation results show that the Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.803 for 20 question items. This value is in the "very high" or "very reliable" category, because it is above 0.7.

Thus, it can be concluded that the instruments used in this study have a very good level of internal consistency, and the items in the questionnaire are correlated and able to measure the same construct consistently. For more detail, it can be seen in table 1 below.

Table 1. Reliability test results for variable X

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach'sAlpha	N of Items
.803	20

Instagram Application Usage Data

Based on the calculation of scores from the Instagram Application usage questionnaire at Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta, the results are shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Variable characteristic data

Statistics		
VAR00021		
N	Valid	60
	Missing	0
	Mean	36.48
	Std. Error of Mean	1.014
	Median	35.50
	Mode	32 ^a
	Std. Deviation	7.858
	Variance	61.745

Range	48
Minimum	23
Maximum	71
Sum	2189

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Based on the research results table above, data on Instagram application usage scores (X) was obtained, with the highest score being 56 and the lowest score being 27. The average value (M) = 44.76, standard deviation (SD) = 7.40, median (Me) = 46, mode (Mo) = 50. From these values, it can be seen that the closer the mean, median, and mode are, the more normal the data distribution is.

Next, data categorization can be performed on the Instagram application usage variable (X) by referring to the provisions in Table 3 as follows:

Table 3. Score categorization requirements

Category	Provisions
Low	$X < M - 1 \text{ SD}$
Moderate	$M - 1 \text{ SD} \leq X < M + 1 \text{ SD}$
High	$X > M + 1 \text{ SD}$

According to the score categorization requirements and the characteristic data of variable (X), the following values are obtained:

- Low Category $X < M - 1 \text{ SD}$
 $X < 44,7 - 7,4$
 $X < 37$
- Medium Category $M - 1 \text{ SD} \leq X < M + 1 \text{ SD}$
 $44,7 - 7,4 \leq X < 44,7 + 7,4$
 $37 \leq X < 52$
- High Category $X > M + 1 \text{ SD}$
 $X > 44,7 + 7,4$
 $X > 52$

Based on the provisions of the table above, the classification of the tendency score for the Instagram application usage variable (X) can be calculated. For more details, see Table 4 below.

Table 4. Classification of tendency scores

		Variable Category (X)			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	4	6.67	6.67	6.67
	Medium	50	83.33	83.33	83.33
	High	6	10.00	10.00	10.00
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Variable X in this study was measured through a number of statement items in the questionnaire using a Likert scale. To simplify the analysis, the respondents' total scores were categorized into three levels, namely low, medium, and high, based on a predetermined score range. This categorization was done to see the distribution of variable X levels among all respondents. Based on the descriptive analysis of 60 respondents, the following results were obtained:

- 1) There were 4 respondents in the low category, or 20.0% of the total respondents.
- 2) There were 50 respondents in the medium category, or 64.4%.
- 3) The high category consisted of 6 respondents, representing 15.6% of the total respondents.

From this distribution, it can be concluded that most respondents were at a moderate level in variable X, indicating that in general, respondents had a moderate tendency towards the data measured by this variable.

Islamic education learning outcome data

The learning outcome of the Akidah Akhlak variable (Y) describes the extent to which students understand and practice the material they have learned. In this study, learning outcomes were measured based on evaluation scores, which were then classified into three categories: low, medium, and high. This categorization aims to determine the distribution of student achievement in the subject of Aqidah Akhlak and serves as a basis for analyzing the factors that influence it. For more detailed data, see Table 5 below:

Table 5. Data on the variable of learning outcomes in Aqidah Akhlak

Statistics		
Y		
N	Valid	60
	Missing	3
Mean		86.60
Median		87.00
Mode		87
Std. Deviation		.867
Variance		.753
Range		4
Minimum		84
Maximum		88
Sum		5196

The learning outcomes of Aqidah Akhlak in this study were analyzed based on the scores obtained from 45 students. Based on statistical data, it is known that the average score (mean) of student learning outcomes is 86 with a standard deviation of 2.825, which indicates a relatively small spread of scores around the mean. The lowest score obtained by students was 83, while the highest score was 95, with a range of 12. The median score was 86.51 and the mode was 85, indicating that most students had learning outcomes in that range. With no missing data, it can be concluded that all respondents provided complete data.

Next, the data on the Islamic education learning outcome variable (Y) can be categorized by referring to the provisions in Table 6 as follows:

Table 6. Requirements for score categorization

Category	Provisions
Low	$X < M - 1 \text{ SD}$
Medium	$M - 1 \text{ SD} \leq X < M + 1 \text{ SD}$
High	$X > M + 1 \text{ SD}$

According to the requirements for categorizing scores and variable characteristic data (X), the following values are obtained:

- Low Category $X < M - 1 \text{ SD}$
 $X < 86 - 2,82$
 $X < 84$
- Medium Category $M - 1 \text{ SD} \leq X < M + 1 \text{ SD}$
 $86 - 2,82 \leq X < 86 + 2,82$
 $84 \leq X < 88$
- High Category $X > M + 1 \text{ SD}$
 $X > 86 + 2,82$
 $X > 88$

Based on the provisions of the table above, the classification of the tendency score of the Islamic education learning outcome variable (Y) can be calculated. For more details, see Table 7 below:

Table 7. Learning outcome categories

Learning outcome categories of Aqidah Akhlak					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	8	13.3	13.3	13.3
	Medium	51	85.0	85.0	98.3
	High	1	1.7	15.6	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Learning outcomes in Aqidah Akhlak were categorized into three levels, namely low, medium, and high, based on the range of scores analyzed. Of the 60 respondents analyzed, it was found that 8 students (6.7%) were in the low category, 51 students (77.8%) in the medium category, and 1 student (15.6%) in the high category.

This analysis shows that most students have moderate learning outcomes in Akidah Akhlak.

Prerequisite Analysis Testing

Normality Test

Table 8. Normality Test

Tests of Normality						
Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk			
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
X	.097	60	.200*	.973	60	.216
Y	.078	60	.200	.984	60	.604

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on Table 8 above, the results of the Normality Test using the Shapiro-Wilk method are seen in the significance table Sig > 0.05, where variable X (Use of Instagram Application) obtained 0.973 and variable Y (Learning Outcomes of Faith and Morals) obtained 0.984.

From the above calculation, variable X has a sig. value of 0.973 > 0.05, meaning that variable X (Instagram Application Usage) is normally distributed, while variable Y has a sig. value of 0.984 > 0.05, meaning that variable Y (Aqidah Akhlak Learning Outcomes) is normally distributed based on the Shapiro-Wilk test. From the above calculations, it can be concluded that the data for both variables X and Y are normally distributed, and the Linearity Test can be continued.

Linearity test

The linearity test is used to determine whether two variables have a linear relationship or are not significant. This test is usually used as a prerequisite in correlation or linear regression analysis. Both variables use a significance level of 0.05 (Subando 2019). The results of the linearity test can be seen in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Linearity Test Results

ANOVA Table							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Y * X	Between Groups	(Combined)	20.317	22	923	1.419	.170
		Linearity	.219	1	.219	.336	.565

	Deviation from Linearity	20.098	21	957	1.470	.149
	Within Groups	24.083	37	651		
	Total	44.400	59			

Based on the linearity test results in Table 9, the Deviation from Linearity obtained a sig. value of 0.149 > 0.05, which indicates that there is a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

From the above calculations, it can be concluded that there is a significant linear relationship between the influence of Instagram use (X) and Learning Outcomes in Faith and Morals (Y), so that we can proceed to the Simple Linear Regression Test.

Hypothesis Testing

At this stage, a correlation test was used to determine the relationship between the two variables using Karl Pearson's product moment correlation technique with the SPSS for Windows program, as shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10. Hypothesis Testing

Correlations			
		X	Y
The effect of Instagram use	Pearson Correlation	1	.901**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
Learning outcomes	Pearson Correlation	.901**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis testing is conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between two variables under study. In this study, Pearson Product Moment correlation test was used to examine the relationship between variable X and variable Y. Based on the analysis results, the calculated r value was -0.901, while the table r value at a significance level of 5% (n = 60) was 0.254.

Because $|r \text{ count}| (0.901) > r \text{ table} (0.254)$ and r count has a positive value, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between the two variables. This

means that if the value of one variable increases, the other variable also tends to increase. This relationship does not occur purely by chance, but has a statistically strong basis. Thus, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. Therefore, the hypothesis states that “there is an influence of the use of the Instagram application on the learning outcomes of students at Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta in the 2024/2025 academic year.”

Furthermore, considering that the calculated r value of 0.901 is between 0.81 and 1.00, this means that this study has a very strong correlation value. The interpretation of the strength of the relationship based on the correlation coefficient (r) value according to Suharsimi Arikunto (2019) is generally as follows in Table 11:

Table 11. Correlation Coefficient Value Table

Range of r Values	Interpretation
0,00 – 0,20	Very Weak
0,21 – 0,40	Weak
0,41 – 0,60	Moderate
0,61 – 0,80	Strong
0,81 – 1,00	Very Strong

DISCUSSION

The Use of Instagram in Class VIII Students of SMP Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta

The results showed that the majority of VIII grade students used Instagram in the medium category, namely 1-3 hours per day. A total of 83.3% of students are in the medium category, 10% in the high category, and only 6.7% are in the low category. This finding is in line with Valkenburg & Peter (2011) research which explains that social media has become an integral part of adolescents' daily lives, especially in terms of social interaction, entertainment, and information seeking. The moderate duration of use indicates a tendency that students do not fully fall into excessive use, although there is still the potential for distraction in learning activities.

Research from Kuss & Griffiths (2017) confirms that social media such as Instagram has a strong visual appeal that easily forms user habits, including among teenagers. This is in line with the phenomenon of students who tend to open Instagram regularly, both to follow

trends and maintain social relations. Thus, a moderate level of use can be an indicator of psychosocial needs being met through social media.

The higher intensity of use in some students also needs to be examined. According to the Uses and Gratifications theory (Katz et al., 1973), individuals use media to fulfill certain needs, both cognitive, affective, and social integrative. In the context of students, the use of Instagram is mostly intended for entertainment, self-existence, and interaction, so that if not directed positively, it can shift their main focus in learning. It is concluded that the use of Instagram in class VIII students of SMP Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School is at a moderate level but tends to increase. This condition needs to be a concern for teachers and parents so that the use of Instagram remains controlled so that it can support learning and not otherwise become an obstacle to students' academic and moral development.

Social Morals in Class VIII Students of SMP Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta

Based on research data, students' social morals are in the medium category with an average moral creed score of 86. Most students (85%) are in the medium category, while only 1.7% are classified as high and 13.3% in the low category. This finding shows that although students' social morals are quite good, there is still room for improvement. According to Al-Ghazali in *Ihya Ulumuddin*, morals are the result of consistent habituation so that to maintain the quality of social morals, continuous coaching is needed. In line with that, Atin & Maemonah (2022) and Abdurahman et al. (2025) explain that social morals are a mirror of religious values that are internalized in everyday life, such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and concern for others. Students who are in the moderate category indicate that most of them understand this value, but their practice still fluctuates, especially in dealing with the influence of the digital environment.

According to research by Juwita et al. (2015), Amalia et al. (2024) and Taib et al. (2024), social media can affect students' social behavior in both positive (solidarity, caring, communication) and negative (individualism, low empathy) aspects. This explains why the social morals of Al Abidin Junior High School students are in the moderate category because social media on the one hand helps build social networks, but on the other hand can weaken face-to-face interactions which are the basis for moral formation. A more contextualized moral education strategy is needed. Teachers and parents need to instill digital literacy based on Islamic values so that students are able to use social media as a means of strengthening

social morals, not the other way around. This approach is in accordance with the concept of moral education according to Ibn Miskawaih, which emphasizes habituation and self-control in the face of changing times.

The Effect of Instagram Use on Social Morals of 8th Grade Students of Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta

The results of Pearson correlation analysis showed a very strong relationship between Instagram use and students' social morals ($r = 0.901$; $p < 0.01$). This means that the more intensive the use of Instagram, the more it affects the quality of their social morals. This finding reinforces Bandura's view in social learning theory, that individual behavior can be influenced by the models they see through the media (Irama et al., 2024). The content displayed on Instagram has the potential to be both positive and negative role models for students.

On the one hand, wise use of Instagram can support learning moral values through access to Islamic content, digital da'wah, and positive communities. Research by Nasrullah (2017), Wahyuni & Harahap (2023), and Chanra & Tasruddin (2025) shows that social media can be an effective da'wah space when used appropriately and allows da'wah to be targeted appropriately. This is in accordance with the recognition of some students who use Instagram to follow Islamic accounts so that it helps strengthen their understanding of morals. However, on the other hand, excessive use also risks reducing learning focus, triggering consumptive attitudes, and weakening direct social interaction. This is in line with Twenge & Campbell (2018) research which found that excessive social media use is associated with increased anxiety, loneliness, and reduced quality of social relationships among adolescents. As a result, students' social morality scores tend to be unstable even though on average they are still in the moderate category. It can be concluded that Instagram has a dual effect: positive when directed towards educational content and interaction, and negative when used excessively or for unproductive purposes. Therefore, intensive guidance from teachers and parents is needed in directing students' use of Instagram so that it is in line with the objectives of Islamic education, especially in fostering social morals. Islamic digital literacy-based supervision strategies are needed to maintain a balance between technology utilization and student character development.

Research Implication

This study provides important implications for the world of education, especially in learning Aqidah Akhlak in secondary schools. First, the finding that the use of Instagram is significantly related to learning outcomes shows that social media not only functions as entertainment, but also has great potential to be an effective learning medium. Teachers can utilize Instagram as a means of delivering material that is more contextual and interesting for digital generation students.

Second, the research results emphasize the importance of Islamic digital literacy. Students need to be equipped with the ability to sort out useful content and avoid distractions that are detrimental to the learning process. This is in line with the concept of digital citizenship in modern education (Ribble, 2015) which emphasizes ethical responsibility in the use of digital media. Thus, schools need to incorporate digital literacy into the Aqidah Akhlak curriculum so that students are able to integrate religious values in social media activities.

Third, this study supports the application of constructivism and connectivism theories in learning (Siemens, 2005; Vygotsky, 1978). Instagram as a network-based platform allows students to build knowledge through social interaction and extensive access to information. If directed appropriately, this can strengthen the internalization of social moral values taught in class.

Fourth, this study also provides practical implications for parents and educational policy makers. It is necessary to supervise and regulate the use of social media in middle school students, both through time control, content selection, and spiritual guidance. The use of Instagram not only has an impact on academic aspects, but is also able to strengthen students' Islamic character development.

Research Limitations

This research certainly has some limitations that need to be considered. First, the research was only conducted on 8th grade students of SMP Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School Surakarta with a sample size of 60 respondents. This scope limitation makes the research results cannot be generalized to all secondary school students in Indonesia.

Second, the instruments used in the form of questionnaires and value documentation only measure quantitative aspects. Qualitative aspects such as motivation, subjective

experience, and the psychosocial influence of using Instagram have not been explored in depth. In fact, these factors are also important in understanding the relationship between social media and student morals.

Third, this study only focuses on the Instagram application as an independent variable. Meanwhile, there are many other factors that can affect Aqidah Akhlak learning outcomes, such as the family environment, teacher teaching methods, and the intensity of students' religious activities outside of school. Thus, the influence of Instagram found in this study cannot be seen as the only determining factor.

Fourth, this study is correlational in nature so it cannot fully prove a cause-and-effect relationship. In other words, although there is a significant correlation between Instagram use and Aqidah Akhlak learning outcomes, this study cannot confirm whether Instagram use directly causes an increase or decrease in learning outcomes. Further research with experimental or mixed-method designs can provide a more comprehensive picture.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the use of Instagram in class VIII students is in the moderate category, with the majority of students using Instagram 1-3 hours per day. Aqidah Akhlak learning outcomes are also in the moderate category, with an average score of 86. Pearson correlation analysis showed a very strong and significant relationship between Instagram usage and Aqidah Akhlak learning outcomes ($r = 0.901$; $p < 0.01$). This shows that the intensity of Instagram use has a significant influence on students' academic achievement, either positively or negatively, depending on how the social media is utilized.

This study contributes in three main aspects. First, it expands the understanding of the integration of social media, especially Instagram, as a learning medium in the Aqidah Akhlak subject which has not been widely researched before. Second, this research confirms the relevance of constructivism, connectivism, and social learning theories in the context of Islamic religious education in the digital era. Third, this study presents empirical evidence that social media has the potential to become a means of Islamic character education if directed with the right digital literacy, as well as filling the gap of empirical studies on the direct relationship between Instagram use and Aqidah Akhlak learning outcomes.

Based on the limitations of this study, several recommendations can be proposed. First, further research should be conducted with a larger sample size and include other schools so that the results are more representative. Second, a qualitative or mixed-method approach is needed to explore more deeply the affective aspects, motivation, and subjective experiences of students related to the use of Instagram in Aqidah Akhlak learning. Third, a longitudinal study can be conducted to determine the consistency of the influence of social media on learning outcomes in the long term. Fourth, there is a need for experiments or intervention trials with the use of Instagram specifically directed to support Aqidah Akhlak learning, so that its effectiveness as an innovative and Islamic learning media can be further understood.

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