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Investigating the Relationship Between the Use of Religious Content Published on Facebook and the Strengthening of Religiosity

(A Case Study of Alberoni University)

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Abstract

This rapid growth of social media, particularly Facebook, has highlighted its role in transmitting religious teachings and influencing various dimensions of users' religiosity. This study aimed to examine the relationship between the utilization of religious content published on Facebook and the reinforcement of religiosity dimensions among the faculty members, staff, and students of Al-Beroni University. Utilizing a dual framework of the "Uses and Gratifications Theory" and "Glock and Stark's Dimensions of Religiosity," this study provides empirical evidence regarding the role of social media's religious content within the Afghan academic community. Methodologically, this study is applied in nature, descriptive-correlational in objective, and utilizes a survey approach for data collection. The statistical population comprised students, faculty, and staff of Al-Beroni University, from which a sample of 137 participants was determined using Cochran's formula and selected via simple random sampling. Data were gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire with a validity coefficient of 0.93 and a reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.88. Data analysis was performed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including Spearman's correlation and regression analysis in SPSS version 26. The findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between the utilization of Facebook's religious content and the ideological, ritualistic, experiential (emotional), and consequential (behavioral) dimensions of religiosity. Specifically, the regression analysis indicated coefficient values of 0.6 for the ideological dimension and 0.5 for the behavioral dimension. Furthermore, the regression model demonstrated that Facebook's religious content, particularly within the experiential dimension, significantly predicts variance in religiosity dimensions. Ultimately, it can be concluded that if Facebook produces and disseminates credible, scholarly content tailored to audience needs, it can serve as an effective tool for reinforcing religiosity, enhancing religious awareness, and promoting Islamic values among the academic community.

Keywords: *Facebook, Social Media, Uses and Gratifications Theory, Religious-Seeking Motives, Students, Al-Beroni University.*

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1. Introduction

The media bear a significant responsibility toward religion. Allah the Almighty states in Surah Al-Imran (3:104): "Let there arise from among you a group inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. It is they who are the successful."

Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"Whoever calls others to guidance will receive a reward equal to the rewards of those who follow him, without their rewards being diminished in the least. Whoever calls others to misguidance will bear a sin equal to the sins of those who follow him, without their sins being diminished in the least."

In light of these divine and prophetic teachings, society in general and the media in particular, as powerful instruments of communication, carry a profound responsibility in promoting moral values and religious guidance. The media play an indispensable role in shaping human life. The relationship between media and religion dates back to the invention of the printing press. Since then, establishing an effective and constructive relationship between religion and mass media, developing appropriate mechanisms, and proposing practical strategies to strengthen this relationship have remained important concerns for both fields (Farhangi, Jame, 2010).

Human beings are born into a media environment and live their entire lives within it. Media constitute the language through which people think, perceive, interpret, and understand the world, while simultaneously forming an essential part of their social environment (Safari Shali & Salehi, 2025). With the continuous emergence of new communication technologies, the influence of media on both individual and collective aspects of contemporary life has expanded dramatically. Today, the Internet and mobile phones have become integral components of modern daily life, fundamentally transforming patterns of communication, information acquisition, and social interaction.

Among contemporary communication technologies, social media have emerged as one of the most influential forces driving cultural and social change, profoundly reshaping traditional forms of human communication. Among these platforms, Facebook has gained remarkable popularity, particularly among young people and educated individuals. Beyond serving as a platform for entertainment, Facebook has evolved into a dynamic environment for exchanging ideas, attitudes, and religious beliefs. Religion, in this context, remains a fundamental source of meaning and purpose in human life (Mahin, Rasekh, Sarvarzadeh, & Khodami, 2023). With the expansion of digital media in Muslim societies, religious teachings and practices have gradually extended beyond traditional physical settings such as Masjids and religious schools into cyberspace and social networking platforms. This phenomenon, commonly referred to in communication studies as the mediatization of religion, has created both new

opportunities and new challenges for the dissemination of Islamic teachings and for shaping the religious beliefs of younger generations.

Given that Afghan society maintains strong religious commitments and that many individuals acquire a substantial portion of their religious knowledge not only through Masjid sermons but also through various media platforms, there is a pressing need to scientifically examine the relationship between the extent and quality of Facebook use and different dimensions of religiosity under current social conditions. Focusing on a case study of Alberoni University, the present research seeks to determine whether Facebook interactions related to religious content have effectively contributed to promoting Islamic values and strengthening religious commitment among users. Furthermore, it aims to investigate, extent of statistically significant relationship exists between the use of Facebook and the enhancement of religiosity among university students.

Problem Statement

In recent years, the rapid expansion of modern information and communication technologies (ICTs) has brought about profound transformations in political, social, cultural, and religious aspects of human life. One significant consequence of this development has been the emergence of new forms of human communication and interaction. Cyberspace, particularly the Internet as the most prominent medium of communication technology, has exerted substantial influence on people's lives, especially among younger generations. One of its most significant outcomes is the formation of online communities in which users communicate through e-mail and various digital communication platforms (Mahin, Rasekh, Sarvarzadeh, & Khodami, 2023).

From the perspective of the Mediatization of Religion Theory, digital platforms have become influential actors in the contemporary communication environment, fundamentally transforming the traditional channels through which religious messages were transmitted. This transformation has challenged the authority of conventional religious institutions and has introduced unprecedented religious pluralism within Muslim societies (Pabbajah, 2024). At a more micro level, Uses and Gratifications Theory suggests that audiences—particularly educated youth are no longer passive audiences of media messages. Rather, they actively select and consume social media content according to their cognitive, psychological, and religious needs (Rubin, 2022).

Applying these theoretical perspectives to the context of Afghanistan's educated community, Alberoni University, as one of the leading higher education institutions in Kapisa Province, represents an important research setting. Faculty members, administrative staff, and students spend considerable time each day viewing, liking, commenting on, and sharing a large volume of religious content on Facebook, including

Qur'anic interpretations, Prophetic Sunnah (Hadith), and video lectures delivered by Islamic scholars and preachers.

Despite this widespread engagement, a significant research gap remains regarding the actual impact of digital religious content consumption on the four major dimensions of religiosity namely the ideological (belief), ritual (practice), intellectual (knowledge), and ethical-behavioral dimensions—among members of Alberoni University. On the one hand, easy access to authentic religious resources through Facebook may enhance religious knowledge and strengthen religious beliefs. On the other hand, because Facebook also contains superficial interpretations, extremist viewpoints, and fragmented religious narratives, concerns have been raised that platform-based religious consumption may weaken traditional religious practices or encourage selective, individualized, and fragmented forms of religiosity (Afghanistan Institute for Strategic Studies, 2024).

Accordingly, this study seeks to provide an empirical answer to the following central question: To what extent does the use of religious content published on Facebook have a direct, statistically significant, and measurable relationship with strengthening or transforming the various dimensions of religiosity among faculty members, administrative staff, and students of Alberoni University?

Research Objectives

A) General Objective

To examine and explain the relationship between the uses of religious content published on Facebook pages and the enhancement of religiosity among faculty members, administrative staff, and students of Alberoni University.

B) Specific Objectives

1. To identify the level, type, and patterns of exposure of faculty members, administrative staff, and students of Alberoni University to religious content published on Facebook.
2. To assess the level of religiosity among faculty members, administrative staff, and students across different dimensions, including ideological (belief), ritual, intellectual, and behavioral dimensions.
3. To analyze the relationship between the extent of religious content consumption on Facebook and the strengthening of the ideological and ritual dimensions of religiosity.
4. To determine the relationship between users' engagement with religious content on Facebook (liking, commenting, and sharing) and the enhancement of the intellectual and consequential (behavioral outcome) dimensions of religiosity.

Research Questions

A) Main Research Question

What is the relationship between the extent and patterns of using religious content published on Facebook and the enhancement of the dimensions of religiosity among faculty members, administrative staff, and students of Alberoni University?

B) Specific Research Questions

1. What are the level, type, and patterns of exposure of faculty members, administrative staff, and students of Alberoni University to religious content on Facebook?
2. What is the current level of religiosity among faculty members, administrative staff, and students across the ideological (belief), ritual, intellectual, and behavioral dimensions?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the extent of religious content consumption on Facebook and the strengthening of the ideological and ritual dimensions of religiosity among faculty members, administrative staff, and students?
4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between users' engagement with religious content on Facebook (liking, commenting, and sharing) and the enhancement of the intellectual and consequential dimensions of religiosity among faculty members, administrative stuff and Students?

2. Literature Review

Numerous studies have been conducted in different countries by prominent scholars in the fields of religion and media regarding this topic. However, limited attention has been devoted to examining the four fundamental dimensions of religiosity—namely the ideological (belief), ritual (practice), intellectual (knowledge), and ethical (moral) dimensions. Furthermore, the statistical significance and the strength of the relationship between the use of religious content disseminated through academic communities, such as universities, and the enhancement of religiosity have not yet been adequately investigated. The following section reviews some of the most relevant empirical studies.

Ogugbuaja and Akpan (2026), in their study entitled "The Impact of Social Media Algorithms on the Formation of Religious Beliefs and Community Engagement," investigated how the algorithms of social media platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, influence users' religious beliefs and participation. The study employed a sample of 400 active social media users. Data were collected through a survey questionnaire and an analysis of algorithmically recommended posts. The findings were analyzed using an interdisciplinary approach that integrated computer science and religious studies, drawing upon Social Learning Theory and Mediatization of Religion Theory. The results demonstrated that algorithm-driven content personalization, through the repeated exposure of users to similar religious

content, reinforces their pre-existing beliefs while simultaneously reshaping their understanding and interpretation of religious teachings (Ogugbuaja, 2026).

Based on research by Shabdan (2026) titled *'Social Media and Religious Engagement Among Muslim Youth in Kyrgyzstan'*, which utilized fieldwork in Bishkek and virtual ethnographic research on the statistical population of Muslim youth in this country (the internet generation), data were analyzed through a qualitative and interdisciplinary approach in the fields of anthropology, religion, and media studies; the findings of this research indicate that social media has become a vital source for acquiring religious knowledge, expressing faith, and shaping identity, and that the internet, by creating innovative forms of digital religiosity, has drastically altered the way the new generation perceives and practices religion (Shabdan, 2026)."

"Research by Pabbajah (2024) titled 'Religious Transformation of Generation Z in the New Media Era' was conducted to explain the diverse patterns of religiosity and religious transformations of this generation resulting from the intensive use of religion-based new media. The study's population and sample focus on individuals belonging to Generation Z (Gen Z), and the research data were gathered through observation tools, interviews, and documentary studies, and analyzed using a descriptive-qualitative method. The findings of this research indicate that the emergence of new media and diverse religious platforms, acting as a powerful tool, has shifted individuals' religious paradigms and led to a religious transformation in Generation Z. However, the results show that intensive religious learning through these media does not necessarily align with the ideal and traditional understanding of religion, and religious comprehension has undergone a transformation. Consequently, the study emphasizes the necessity of establishing a balance between media literacy and religious literacy alongside the increasing penetration of technology (Pabbajah, 2024)."

"A study conducted by Safari Shali and Salehi (2025) using a quantitative method and survey technique among 2,060 university students across Iran examined the relationship between media consumption and religiosity. In their research, they found that there is a significant and inverse relationship between the use of foreign social networks (especially Instagram and Telegram) and students' level of religiosity, whereas the consumption of domestic media shares a positive and direct correlation with their level of religious commitment. On the other hand, the study by Ahmadi et al. (2024), titled *'Examining the Impact of Radio in Promoting Understanding and Strengthening Islamic Values in Light of Media Audience Theory'*, aimed to explore the effectiveness of radio religious programs in enhancing youth's religious knowledge. This research was conducted using a quantitative method and a survey approach among 92 randomly selected final-year Sharia students at Kabul University, and its questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS software and the Pearson correlation test. In their study, they found a positive and

significant relationship between the frequency of listening to radio religious programs and the reinforcement of Islamic values, demonstrating that this medium plays an effective role in increasing religious knowledge, improving moral behaviors, and promoting Quranic sciences among youth, provided that program content aligns with audience needs and expectations (Salehi, 1404)."

"Ahmadi, Ayoubi, and Azarmi (2024), in a study titled *'Examining the Impact of Radio in Promoting Understanding and Strengthening Islamic Values in Light of Media Audience Theory'*, found that the more the audience listens to radio religious programs, the greater the effectiveness of these programs becomes (Ahmadi, Ayoubi, & Azarmi, 2024)."

Anwar and Mujib (2022), in their study titled "Faith-Based Islamic Content and Motivations for Using Religious Social Media," employed a survey method and quantitative approach to examine the impact of the intensity and frequency of social media use on users' motivations for engaging with religious content. The target population consisted of followers of Islamic content pages and accounts on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter. From this population, a sample of 562 respondents was selected. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in SmartPLS software. The findings indicated that both the intensity and frequency of social media use have a positive and significant effect on users' motivations for acquiring religious information, spiritual growth, well-being, and entertainment. Among these, the strongest effect was observed on the motivation for obtaining religious information, while the weakest effect was related to spiritual enlightenment.

Horzmizadeh, Saei, and Bateni (2022), in their study titled "Developing Professional Ethical Standards for National Media Based on Islamic Teachings with Emphasis on the Book *Miraaj al-Sa'adah*," aimed to extract ethical principles for media grounded in religious perspectives. This research employed Grounded Theory methodology and coding of textual sources in the field of media ethics. The study examined media functions in four categories: informational, educational, guiding, and entertainment. The findings revealed that the core category in national media ethics is "justice." An Islamic ethical media system, according to the study, should promote moderation in the four faculties of the human soul (intellectual, anger, and desire faculties), thereby fostering moral virtues. The study further emphasized the necessity of developing a national media ethical charter and avoiding consumerism promotion in advertising and religious programming.

Rahimi and Jahangiri (2021), in their study titled "Visualization of Islamic Research Related to Monotheistic Religions in the Twenty-First Century on Social Media," aimed to identify and map the central themes of monotheistic religions in cyberspace. This study was conducted using bibliometric methods and co-word analysis on articles indexed in the Web of Science database. Altmetric indicators

were used to assess their media impact. The findings indicated that Islamic-related topics are categorized into four main clusters: Islamic traditions, Islamophobia, Islamic finance, and Muslim countries.

Brubaker and Haigh (2017), in their study titled "The Facebook Religious Experience: Uses and Gratifications of Faith-Based Content," examined the reasons Christians use Facebook for religious purposes. The sample consisted of 335 Christian Facebook users, recruited through online promotional invitations. Data were collected using an online questionnaire and analyzed through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The results identified four main motivations for engaging with religious content on Facebook: religious promotion, spiritual enlightenment, information seeking, and entertainment.

Farhangi and Jame (2010), in their study titled "Media and Religion," investigated users' motivations and patterns of engagement with online religious content. This quantitative survey included 230 management students at the University of Urmia selected from a population of 700 students using random sampling. Data were analyzed using Chi-square tests and Pearson correlation coefficients in SPSS. The results showed that online religious content positively influenced users' beliefs (69.1%) and increased their religious knowledge (67%). Moreover, significant positive relationships were found between exposure to religious internet content and variables such as content attractiveness, user satisfaction, leisure time, and religious beliefs. The most common purposes of users' engagement were Qur'anic education and interpretation (34.4%) and responses to religious questions (29.1%).

Panjie and Afkhami (2008), in their study titled "Religion and Theories of Media Effects: An Inquiry into Authentic Islamic Texts and Media Theories," aimed to develop a framework for achieving effective religious influence on audiences. This qualitative and interdisciplinary research demonstrated that, in order to achieve the highest level of impact in the domains of ethics and belief, religious media should move beyond purely direct and emotional approaches and instead emphasize rationality and well-structured logical reasoning, grounded in the concepts of the Qur'an and authentic Hadith. Furthermore, drawing on modern communication theories such as the cultivation theory and reinforcement theory, the study suggests that presenting religious messages in indirect and implicit formats (such as films and television series), as well as producing content aligned with the linguistic and cultural characteristics of audiences, can significantly enhance the durability and depth of religious messages (Panjie & Afkhami, 2008).

Miller, Mundey, and Hill (2013), in their study titled "The Impact of Religiosity on Social Network Membership and Usage among Emerging Adults," employed a survey method using data from the National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR) to examine the relationship between religiosity and social media usage among young adults aged 18 to 23. Data were collected through questionnaires and subsequently analyzed. The findings revealed that individuals with stronger religious affiliations—particularly Catholics and evangelical Protestants—are more likely to be members of social networking

sites compared to non-religious individuals. However, certain forms of individual religious practice, such as Bible reading, charitable giving, and volunteer activities, were associated with reduced levels of social media use. In contrast, broader social and civic engagement was found to increase the likelihood of social network membership (Miller, Mundey, & Hill, 2013).

Conceptual Definition

Islamic Religion: Islam is the most complete and final divine religion, perfected with the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The word *Islam* is derived from the root *"Salam"*, meaning correctness, peace, health, and well-being (Najafi & Mohammadi, 2012). Allah Almighty states in Surah Al-Imran (3:19): *"Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam."* During his 23 years of prophet hood, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) not only conveyed divine commandments to people but also demonstrated the highest examples of moral conduct through his behavior. The main goal of Islam is to nurture pure, just, and compassionate human beings in order to establish a peaceful society free from oppression. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated in a well-known hadith in *Bihar al-Anwar*, Vol. 67, p. 372: *"I was sent only to perfect good moral character."* In Islam, no individual or race is superior to another except through purity of heart and piety. Muslims strengthen their relationship with God and serve society through practical acts such as prayer, fasting, and charity (Zakat).

Social Networks: The term "social network" was first introduced by J. A. Barnes in 1954 and quickly became a key concept in research and studies. In traditional social network theory, a social network is defined as a set of social entities, including individuals and organizations, connected through meaningful social relationships and interacting through the sharing of values. Social media refers to the use of web-based, mobile, and communication technologies that facilitate conversation. It also describes online tools used by people to share content, profiles, comments, views, experiences, and thoughts (Eftekhari, 2015, cited in Hazem Sh. A., 2025).

Facebook: Facebook is a social media platform launched in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, an American. It is currently considered one of the most widely used social networks in the world in terms of users and popularity. Zuckerberg initially developed Facebook in his dormitory at Harvard University as a social website exclusively for Harvard students. However, it quickly expanded beyond a single faculty and gained rapid popularity. By the end of its second week, more than half of Harvard students had joined, and within less than a year, its membership reached millions. Facebook is now available in more than 40 languages, including Dari. Notably, about 70% of its users are outside the United States.

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is based on a two-domain model. The first domain concerns religious content published on Facebook, which is examined through the Uses and Gratifications Theory

proposed by Elihu Katz. The second domain focuses on the enhancement of religiosity, which is based on the Glock and Stark multidimensional model of religiosity. Glock and Stark argue that individuals may demonstrate strong belief while being weak in ritual practices. Each of these theories is presented below:

Uses and Gratifications Theory

Although this theory cannot be attributed to a single individual or institution, its early foundations date back to the 1940s, particularly in the work of Herta Herzog on radio audience motivations. However, its formal development as a coherent scientific paradigm was established in 1974 by Elihu Katz, Jay G. Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch. They introduced this theory in contrast to traditional perspectives such as the hypodermic needle model, which considered audiences as passive and defenseless recipients of media messages.

The main purpose of this theory was to shift the focus of media research from the question *"What do media do to people?"* to *"What do people do with media?"*

Key characteristics of the theory:

- Active Audience: Audiences are active and aware; they can interpret media messages in addition to receiving information.
- Goal-oriented selection: Individuals select and consume media content based on their specific needs.
- Media competition: Media compete with other information sources to satisfy audience needs.

Basic audience needs according to Katz:

1. Cognitive needs (information and knowledge acquisition)
2. Affective needs (emotional satisfaction and aesthetic experience)
3. Personal identity needs (strengthening values and self-understanding)
4. Social integration needs (connection with friends, like-minded individuals, and society)
5. Tension release needs (entertainment and escapism) (Katz, 2024)

Glock and Stark's Dimensional Model of Religiosity

Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark were among the first scholars to introduce this model in their 1965 book *Religion and Society in Tension*. Prior to the 1960s, empirical studies measured religiosity using a single indicator, such as church or Masjid attendance. Glock and Stark argued that religiosity is not a unidimensional concept but a multidimensional and complex construct. For example, an individual may have strong religious beliefs but weak ritual practice, or vice versa. Their aim was to develop a more comprehensive and accurate tool for measuring religiosity.

Five dimensions of religiosity in this model:

- Ideological dimension: Core beliefs to which individuals are committed (e.g., monotheism, prophecy, resurrection).
- Ritualistic dimension: Religious practices and rituals expected of individuals (e.g., prayer, fasting, and supplication).
- Experiential (emotional) dimension: Direct feelings and emotional experiences related to the Divine (e.g., inner peace or awe of God).
- Intellectual dimension: Level of knowledge and understanding of religious history, teachings, and texts.
- Consequential (behavioral) dimension: The impact of religious beliefs and practices on everyday behavior, ethics, social interactions, and human relations.

4. Materials and methods

This study adopts a quantitative approach and is classified as applied in objective and descriptive-correlational in nature and method. The primary aim is to scientifically explain the relationship between the utilization level and manner of religious content on Facebook (as the independent variable) and the reinforcement of religiosity dimensions (as the dependent variable) at Al-Beroni University. The statistical population consists of students, faculty, and staff of Al-Beroni University during the 1405 academic year, comprising a total population of 4,500 students, 224 faculty members, and 135 administrative staff Total N = 4,859.

The primary measurement instrument is a closed-ended questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The first section contains researcher-developed items based on the "Uses and Gratifications Theory" to measure the level of exposure, content type, and engagement on Facebook. The second section comprises standardized and localized items from "Glock and Stark's Religiosity Model" to assess the ideological, ritualistic, experiential (emotional), intellectual, and consequential (behavioral) dimensions. The sampling technique employed is proportionate stratified random sampling; each faculty within the university was treated as a stratum, and random quotas were allocated proportional to the population size of each faculty. The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula based on variance data. Following a pilot study of 30 questionnaires, the population variance was calculated at 1.065, the acceptable margin of error was set at 0.1864, and the confidence level at 95% was set to 1.96. Substituting these values into the formula yielded a final sample size of 137 participants.

$$N=T^2*S^2/D^2$$

The critical value for the confidence level (t) in social sciences is set at 1.96.

The variance of the statistical population, calculated from a pilot study of 30questionnaires, is 1.065; this indicates good homogeneity and a high degree of similarity among the responses.

The acceptable margin of error (standard error of the mean) for this statistical population is established at 0.1864.

$N= 1.96^2*1.065\ 0.18^2$

N= 3.8416*1.065/ 0.0324

N= 4.091/0.0361

N=199.6= 200

Tab1(Reliability Statistics)

N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
23	.886

As indicated in the table above, which illustrates the reliability (internal consistency) of the questionnaire items, the reliability coefficient is calculated at 0.886. This demonstrates a good and positive level of reliability, ensuring the generalizability of the items to the target population.

Validity of the Study

The validity of the study was examined in terms of content validity using two indices: the Content Validity Ratio (CVR) and the Content Validity Index (CVI). Initially, the questionnaire was evaluated by eight experts and specialists in the relevant field.

For the calculation of CVR, the experts were asked to assess the necessity of each item on a three-point scale. Based on Lawshe's table, all items were confirmed, with CVR values exceeding 0.80. Additionally, to evaluate the qualitative relevance of the items, the CVI was calculated for each item. This section was also confirmed by the experts, and the obtained results were in accordance with Lawshe's criteria, with all items scoring above 0.92.

Data Analysis Method: The data collected through the questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS version 26. At the level of descriptive statistics, indicators such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were employed. At the level of inferential statistics, since the sample size exceeded 100 respondents, the skewness and kurtosis test was first used to assess the normality of data distribution. The results indicated that the data did not follow a normal distribution.

Therefore, the Spearman correlation coefficient was used to examine relationships between variables, and multiple regression analysis was applied to predict changes in the dependent variable.

4. Results

Descriptive Findings (Examination of the Sample's Demographic Characteristics)

The descriptive findings (examination of the sample's demographic characteristics) were analyzed.

Tab2 (Gender Variable)

Cumulative Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Frequency

Valid	مرد	200	100.0	100.0	100.0

Due to existing limitations, all respondents were male.

Tab3 (Task)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Teacher	14	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Student	169	84.5	84.5	91.5
	stuff	16	8.0	8.0	99.5
	22.00	1	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Among the respondents, 14 individuals (7%) were faculty members, 169 individuals (84.5%) were students, and 16 individuals (8%) were staff members.

Tab4: Education level

T		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor's	42	21.0	21.0	21.0
	12-grade	145	72.5	72.5	93.5
	Master's	11	5.5	5.5	99.0
	No response	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The educational level of the respondents shows that 42 individuals (21%) held a bachelor's degree, 145 individuals (72.5%) were high school graduates, 11 individuals (5.5%) had other educational qualifications, and 2 responses were left unanswered.

Tab5:Facebook usage level	Cumulative Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Frequency
Less than 1 hour	55.8	55.8	55.8	111
1-3 hour	86.4	30.7	30.5	61
More than 3 hours	92.5	6	6	12
Unclear	96.5	1	1	2
No response	100	3.5	3.5	7

The highest percentage of usage corresponds to the first option (less than one hour). In this regard, the option of one to three hours accounts for 61 responses (30%), while the option of more than one hour

includes a frequency of 12 responses (6%). In addition, one unclear response and seven unanswered responses were recorded.

Tab6: Faculty

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Medical	22	11.0	11.0	11.0
	Engineering	57	28.5	28.5	39.5
	Islamic	14	7.0	7.0	46.5
	Agriculture	11	5.5	5.5	52.0
	Journalism	17	8.5	8.5	60.5
	Law	29	14.5	14.5	75.0
	Literature	11	5.5	5.5	80.5
	Education	19	9.5	9.5	90.0
	Economy	19	9.5	9.5	99.5
	100.00	1	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Faculty

According to the table above, the distribution of respondents by faculty is as follows: 22 from the Faculty of Medicine, 57 from Engineering, 14 from Sharia, 11 from Agriculture, 17 from Journalism, 29 from Law, 11 from Literature, 19 from Education, and 19 from the Faculty of Economics. Among these, only 1 questionnaire remained unanswered regarding the faculty section (missing data), bringing the total number of respondents to 137.

Inferential Findings

In this section, regression analysis is used to examine the strength of relationships, and Spearman correlation analysis is applied to determine the level of correlation and statistical significance of the data.

Regression Analysis

Predicting the Role of Facebook in Enhancing Dimensions of Religiosity

Model 1: The effect of religious content on Facebook on the enhancement of the behavioral/consequential dimension of religiosity

Tab7: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.344	0.118	0.114	2.01232

The multiple correlation coefficient in this study is 0.344, indicating a relatively weak to moderate correlation between the independent and dependent variables. On the other hand, the coefficient of determination is 0.118, which shows that only 11.8% of the variation in the behavioral dimension of religiosity is explained by religious content on Facebook.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	219.284	1	219.284	87.357	.000[b]
	Residual	497.021	198	2.510		
	Total	716.305	199			

a. Dependent Variable: the role of Facebook in enhancing the Affective dimension of religiosity

b. Predictors: (Constant), the relationship between religious content on Facebook and the behavioral Dimension of Religiosity

The ANOVA table shows that the value of F is 87.357 and the significance level (Sig.) is 0.000 < 0.05, indicating that the regression model is statistically significant overall. This means that religious content on Facebook can predict, to a weak-to-moderate extent, changes in this dimension.

1) Model 2: The Effect of Religious Content on Facebook on the Enhancement of the Emotional Dimension of Religiosity

Tab7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.553[a]	.306	.303	1.58436

a. Predictors: (Constant), the relationship between Religious content published on Facebook and the strengthening of the affective dimension of Religiosity

The above table shows that the strength of the relationship between religious content published on Facebook and the enhancement of the emotional dimension of religiosity is 0.533, indicating a moderate to strong correlation between the variables.

Tab8: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	107.425	1	107.425	26.528	.000[b]
	Residual	801.784	198	4.049		
	Total	909.209	199			

a. Dependent Variable: user satisfaction and engagement with Religious Content

b. Predictors: (Constant), the relationship between religious content published on Facebook and the strengthening of the behavioral dimension of Religiousity

Furthermore, the one-way ANOVA model indicates that the relationship is statistically significant and positive.

B. Correlation of Research Indicators

Test of Data Normality:

Since the sample size was greater than 100, skewness and kurtosis coefficients were used to assess the normality or non-normality of the data for higher accuracy. The obtained values were greater than +2, indicating that the data do not follow a normal distribution.

Therefore, due to the non-normal distribution of the data, the **Spearman correlation test** was used to examine the significance level and correlation among the indicators.

Tab9:Statistis

		The level of Facebook Use as an important source of Religious content	User satisfactions and engagement with Religious content	Using Facebook Religious content to enhance the belief and ritual dimension of Religiosity	The role of Facebook in enhancing the affective dimension of Religiosity	the relationship between religious content published on Facebook and the strengthening of the behavioral dimension of Religiosity
N	Valid	200	200	200	200	200
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Skewness		9.411	7.623	7.458	10.555	6.446
Std. Error of Skewness		0.172	0.172	0.172	0.172	0.172
Kurtosis		90.687	67.842	65.357	134.277	42.006

Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.342	0.342	0.342	0.342	0.342
	54.7363	44.33785	43.38164	61.39205	37.49424
	265.0085	198.2524	190.9888	392.3901	122.7513

Table 1: Correlation between the level of Facebook usage (as a source of religious content) and satisfaction and interaction with religious content.

Tab10:Correlations

User satisfactions and engagement with Religious content	The level of Facebook Use as an important source of Religious content			
.597**	1.000	Correlation Coefficient	The level of Facebook Use as an important source of Religious content	Spearman's rho
.000	.	Sig. (2-tailed)		
200	200	N		
1.000	.597**	Correlation Coefficient	User satisfactions and engagement with Religious content	
.	.000	Sig. (2-tailed)		
200	200	N		

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

The correlation coefficient of 0.597 with a significance level of 0.01 indicates a moderate to strong positive correlation. This means that the more respondents use Facebook as a source of religious content, the higher their level of satisfaction and interaction with it becomes.

Tab11:Correlations

the relationship between religious content published on Facebook and the strengthening of the behavioral dimension of Religiosity	The role of Facebook in enhancing the affective dimension of Religiosity	Using Facebook Religious content to enhance the belief and ritual dimension of Religiosity		
.528**	.627**	1.000	Correlation Coefficient	Using Facebook Religious content to enhance the belief and ritual dimension of Religiosity Spearman's rho
.000	.000	.	Sig. (2-tailed)	
200	200	200	N	

.663**	1.000	.627**	Correlation Coefficient	The role of Facebook in enhancing the affective dimension of Religiosity
.000	.	.000	Sig. (2-tailed)	
200	200	200	N	
1.000	.663**	.528**	Correlation Coefficient	the relationship between religious content published on Facebook and the strengthening of the behavioral dimension of Religiosity
.	.000	.000	Sig. (2-tailed)	
200	200	200	N	

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

The Spearman correlation analysis in the above table indicates that the use of religious content on Facebook for strengthening the ideological and ritual dimensions and the emotional dimension shows a strong and statistically significant correlation, with a coefficient of 0.627.

Similarly, the relationship between the use of religious content on Facebook and its effect on strengthening the behavioral dimension shows a moderate correlation, with a coefficient of 0.527.

Furthermore, the role of Facebook in strengthening the emotional dimension in relation to religious content and its association with the behavioral dimension yields a coefficient of 0.663, indicating a strong and significant correlation between these components.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the level of exposure to religious content published on Facebook and the enhancement of various dimensions of religiosity among respondents. The results of Spearman's correlation test showed that exposure to religious content on Facebook is positively and significantly correlated with the ideological and ritual dimension (r = 0.627), the emotional dimension (r = 0.663), and the behavioral or consequential dimension (r = 0.528).

Furthermore, the regression analysis indicated that religious content published on Facebook can predict a portion of the changes in the emotional and behavioral dimensions of religiosity; however, the explanatory power in the behavioral dimension was relatively limited. These findings are consistent with the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which considers media users as active audiences who select media based on their cognitive, emotional, and social needs. Accordingly, purposeful use of religious content on

Facebook by students can enhance religious awareness, strengthen belief systems, and foster a sense of spiritual belonging.

On the other hand, the results also align with the Glock and Stark model of religiosity, as the strongest effects of Facebook were observed in the ideological, emotional, and to some extent behavioral dimensions, indicating that social media may influence certain dimensions of religiosity more than others.

The findings of this study are also consistent with those of Farhangi and Jame (1389), who found that the use of online religious content increases religious beliefs and knowledge among users. Similarly, the results correspond with Anwar and Mujib (2021), who reported that social media use enhances users' motivations for acquiring religious information and spiritual growth. Moreover, the findings are in agreement with Brubaker and Haigh (2017), who identified religious promotion, information seeking, and spiritual enlightenment as the main motivations for engaging with religious content on Facebook. Additionally, the results align with the studies of Ahmad, Ayoubi, and Azarmi (1403), who reported a positive relationship between the use of religious media and the strengthening of Islamic values.

Furthermore, the findings are consistent with Shabdan (2026), who highlighted the role of social media in shaping the religious identity of young people, as well as with Ogugbuaja and Akpan (2026), who emphasized the impact of social media on strengthening religious beliefs.

Despite the overall consistency with previous studies, some findings differ from those of Safri Shali and Salehi, who reported that the use of certain foreign social networks such as Instagram and Telegram is associated with a decrease in students' religiosity. In contrast, the present study found a positive relationship between exposure to religious content on Facebook and the enhancement of religiosity. This difference may be attributed to variations in the independent variables, as the present study focused not on general social media use, but specifically on purposeful exposure to religious content.

In response to the main research question, it can be stated that there is a direct, positive, and significant relationship between the level and manner of using religious content on Facebook and the enhancement of religiosity dimensions. The findings also indicate that increased user engagement with religious content (such as viewing, reading, liking, sharing, and commenting) leads to higher satisfaction and strengthens the ideological, emotional, and behavioral dimensions of religiosity.

Therefore, the main hypothesis and the related sub-hypotheses of the study were confirmed. The limitations of this research include the restriction of the population to Alberoni University, the exclusively male sample, the use of a self-reported questionnaire, the focus on a single social network (Facebook), and the cross-sectional nature of the study. These limitations suggest that generalization of the findings to other universities, female populations, or other social media platforms should be made with caution.

Nevertheless, this study is one of the first quantitative investigations in Afghanistan to examine the relationship between religious content on Facebook and different dimensions of religiosity using the Uses and Gratifications Theory and the Glock and Stark model. It can therefore serve as a foundation for future research in the field of media and religion.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the relationship between the use of religious content published on Facebook and the dimensions of religiosity among students of Alberoni University. The results indicated that purposeful and continuous use of religious content on Facebook is positively and significantly associated with the strengthening of the ideological, ritual, emotional, and behavioral dimensions of religiosity. Moreover, increased user engagement with this content, particularly in the emotional dimension, plays an important role in enhancing religiosity.

The results of the regression analysis further showed that religious content on Facebook, although with varying intensity, is able to predict part of the changes in the emotional and behavioral dimensions of religiosity. From a theoretical perspective, this study, through the integration of the Uses and Gratifications Theory and the Glock and Stark model of religiosity, provides relevant empirical evidence to explain the relationship between social media and religiosity in the context of Afghan academic society.

From an applied perspective, the findings suggest that social media platforms, when used for the production and dissemination of credible, scholarly, and audience-appropriate religious content, can go beyond being mere communication or entertainment tools and become effective platforms for religious education, strengthening Islamic values, and enhancing moral awareness and responsibility among the younger generation.

The added value of this research lies in the fact that, unlike many previous studies that have only examined the general impact of social media on religiosity, this study specifically investigates the relationship between exposure to religious content on Facebook and different dimensions of religiosity within the Afghan academic context. It also employs a coherent theoretical framework and a quantitative methodology based on correlation and regression analysis. Therefore, its findings can contribute to enriching the academic literature in the field of media and religion in Afghanistan and provide a basis for further studies in other universities and social media platforms.

Despite these contributions, the findings should be interpreted in light of several limitations. First, the study population was limited to faculty members, staff, and students of Alberoni University, which restricts the generalizability of the results to other universities and social groups. Second, due to practical constraints, all respondents were male, and the perspectives of female participants were not included. Third, the data were collected through self-administered questionnaires, which may involve response

bias. Fourth, the study focused exclusively on Facebook and did not include other social media platforms. Fifth, the cross-sectional and correlational nature of the research limits the ability to draw causal inferences. Therefore, future studies are recommended to use longitudinal designs, mixed methods, and advanced modeling techniques to examine these relationships more precisely.

7. Suggestions

A) Practical and Applied Recommendations:

1. Production and dissemination of credible, scholarly, and engaging religious content on Facebook by professionals, Islamic scholars, and specialized creators to reinforce various dimensions of religiosity.
2. Organizing university-level seminars, workshops, and educational training sessions focusing on the proper utilization of social media and enhancing digital literacy to help users recognize credible religious accounts and pages.

B) Suggestions for Future Research:

3. Conducting future studies using qualitative approaches or mixed-methods designs to thoroughly explore the underlying dynamics of social media's impact on religiosity.
4. Implementing comparative research across different genders (male and female) to evaluate variations in religious content consumption patterns.
5. Carrying out similar studies in other public and private universities and among diverse societal groups, including various age segments and demographics within Afghanistan.
6. Investigating and analyzing the role of other prominent social media platforms—such as Instagram, Telegram, YouTube, and X (formerly twitter)—in strengthening the dimensions of religiosity in future research…

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