THE DIGITAL DISTRACTERS: HOW SOCIAL MEDIA DECLINE RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AMONG STUDENTS AT HIGHER LEVEL

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Social Media, Religious Practices, Beliefs, Youth, Spiritual, Digital Decline	This study investigates the relationship between fall in conventional beliefs and the rise in internet use. Social media platforms have aided in the decrease of traditional and group religious activities by encouraging an individualistic and instantaneous culture. The data were collected from different programs of M.phil and PhD students the sample size for population in 255 in which men is this 87 men & 168 women who participated in social media decreasing prayers using a statistical descriptive design. The social- demographic records are offered and analyzed first and then records relating to analyze questions is likewise offered and analyzed in terms of findings received from the field. The research applied descriptive and inferential statistics that include mean, standard deviation, frequency and chi-square. The people are accepting more secular perspectives and questioning their religious beliefs as a result of how frequently they interact with a diverse spectrum of people and ideas on social media. Using quantitative data from questionnaires paper needs to investigate underlying causes of this trend in order to determine whether technological interaction has altered the landscape of faith. The study underlines the need for religious groups to adapt and develop new ways to communicate with those who subscribe in digital age by investigating the links between religious and online interaction.
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INTRODUCTION

The modern world has serious concerns about Islam. The spirituality and religious beliefs have recently gained popularity in social sciences, and the field of organizational and management studies has observed an increase in their effect (Fotaki, Altman, & Koning, 2020). Though it has somewhat subsided (Neal, Altman, & Mayrhofer, 2022), especially in the mainstream academic outlets (Fotaki et al., 2020), management researchers' earlier rejection of religious and spiritual

belief (King, 2008; Tracey, 2012) has impeded accumulation of knowledge necessary to support conceptualization and educational trustworthiness of topic (Alshehri, Fotaki, & Kauser, 2021). The standing of spirituality and religious belief is ability to arrive stressed ever more for MOS experts (Neal, Altman & Meyerhof, 2022; Tracey, 2012). By wave them as basis of institution and exploring their significant in diverse workforce in international world (Fotaki et al., 2020). People increasingly rely heavily on social media to learn about and discuss social and political concerns in communities (Walsh, 2020). Moreover, social media is now an essential component of ordinary politics, being used for both policy legitimization and campaigns (MacFarquhar, 2016).

They now participate in social movements, protests, and radicalism (Zeitzoff, 2018). The social media sites such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook have impacted people's lives and the way they interact with one another, as well as the majority of the world's population relying on them to communicate with one another, hear news, and check out distant friends and relatives in a short amount of time. Someone influence social interactions and communication, and they could even be detrimental to open participation and logical, reasonable discourse (Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2020). Tromble (2018), thus, social media has led to the rise of fresher more popular approaches to community involvement that have a capacity to lift up concerns of inequity to the political agenda. People who were formerly isolated from one another now share various thoughts, cultures, and religions because of globalization (Castles 2002). Diversity within the workforce is viewed as a difficult problem in the modern world. Diversity in the workplace is defined by Ditomaso et al. (2007) as variability inside the corporation respecting gender, ethnic background, sex, religion, and other elements of the variation. Worship and prayer are seen as distinctive to their practice because many people identify their beliefs as different from other religions.

This expression is considered acceptable in case because it has clear and consistent interactions to review when the project in question is meant. The phrase feels appropriate in this context due to its reliable and obvious reference to analysis of which this project has become intended. Teachers may accidentally neglect to give the assistance and resources necessary to promote pupil learning and usage as they believe students are used to and comfortable with employing particular forms of intent. (Väljataga & Fiedler, for 2009; Cole, 2009). Despite his interest in religion and spirituality, instead of examining how the media affects religion, RSST looks at the way faith-centered organizations regulate media use, with an emphasis on current media and digital technologies. This method examines media in physical contexts, which also incorporate cultural component that promotes participation. They remain in touch with them continuously (Al-Hamad, 2019). Social media is essential in today's world since it is the main channel for communication amid people & businesses worldwide. These platforms improve accessibility and connectedness by facilitating the quick flow of the news, ideas, and information. They also give people chance to participate in societal and political issues and communicate what they think.

Ghaffar (2021), social media has developed into potent marketing tool that enables companies to directly and affordably contact large audience. The diverse definitions of religion imply that

the term has a greater variety of meanings, according to Agbikimi (2014). Barrett (2010) argues that rather than being result of mental processes that take place away from religious contexts, faith traditions and views should be thought inert. Ejizu (2008) defined religion as persons' awareness of sacred and universal truth and their expression of sympathetic during daily life. Cherry (2019) claims that psychoanalysts were very contemptuous. Moreover, friendly news supports uncovering to diverse views, covering civil and nonbeliever outlooks, that challenge careful education and boost doubt (Taylor, 2025). The chance of unsubstantiated conscientious content connected to internet still donates to misreport, superior few young nations to question or reinterpret their conviction (Lynch & Robbins, 2025). As connected to the internet policies spur open discourse, they decrease exclusivity of over societies, making scrupulous devotion less binding (Campbell & Tsuria, 2025). Thus, many families immediately supply instructions private piety over standardized hope donating to decline of the established holy date (Twenge, 2025).

Objectives of Study

1. Investigate the role of social media decline the religious practices and belief among the university students.
2. To evaluate the impact of online communities and religious engagement in among the university students .

LITERATURE REVIEW

A group of internet sites designed for the development, sharing, and transfer of ideas, content, and information are referred to as social media. These platforms allow user communication in an array of media, like written words, images, recordings and video, along with cooperation. Social media has greatly broadened availability and reach of religious neighborhoods, enabling virtual worship, global relationships, and religious conversations, which have had important effect on religious practices. Henderson (2020) start that social media pursuit are significantly inefficient for teenagers and junior grown up. Stewart and Echchaibi (2020) argue that third spaces are stared as legitimate venues of religious practice. Different studies display increasing style of scrupulous detachment between young crowd, accompanying many switching toward civil, vain, alternative hypothesis schemes (Research, 2025). Religious practices frequently demand organized partnership, to degree accompanying worship aids, pleading, or collective ceremonies. Terizi et al. (2011) reported that persons who are engaged in online interchange also show aggressive sign. John et al. (2020) said that unrestricted use of facility has offered by social media networking platforms has impacted emotional and mental problems Including bellicose.

Religious Practices

The meaning of religious practice is word that includes activities and rituals such as attending religious services, praying at fixed times, showing religious objects, promoting religion and others. Faith and religion have traditionally been two of the most common methods to do this; limiting these practices is to prevent many people from seeking the highest good (Nussbaum 2001, 179). The continuing existence for freedom is believed to hinge on individual beliefs, the freedom of expressing values, and capability to freely express those views (Trigg 2013, 164).

However, reason religion is given special protection beyond freedom of conscience is because of its importance to other human capacities and activities, intellectual and ethical expression, moral education of the young, family, and larger community, and cultural continuity and other forms of affiliation and interaction (Nussbaum Citation 2001, 178–179). A motor vehicle for the transportation of students, children of students, teachers and other persons acting as guardians to school or school activities for transportation of students, children of students. In discovery supports proof from previous research from Hungerman (2014), which has been proven in this study that official educational and religious surroundings will be more connected in their religiosity.

Social Media & Religious Practices

The effect of social media on students' religious practices in higher education has increased in importance as a field of study in recent years. The social media services like Twitter, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and others have completely transformed the way that religious content is shared and used. The research shows that these platforms enhance the accessibility of religious instruction, virtual sermons, and online religious groups for students at universities. The social media support crook well because People spend lot of time on social media for Activities such as attach with others and think of for information (Thoumrungroje, 2014). He criticized religion for being unloving, harsh & hostile to people who did not practice specific religion. Moreover, friendly radio advances self-governing goals and all-encompassing principles, that constantly contradict established scrupulous opinions (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2024). Still, the fast-moving, pleasure-compelled type of public news competes for young society's occasion and reflection, lowering linking in established conscientious projects (Smith & others., 2024).They are all confirmed that social media network addiction bas important association with suicidal ideation.

Social Media Networks & Tools

Previous study conducted in Muslim society refer that grade social media networks such as Twitter, Google, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, Messenger, and others are more close among university students at higher level (Jamalludin, 2018). The effect of social media on student's religious practices in higher education has increased in importance as a field of study in recent years. Social media services like Twitter, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, others have completely transformed the way that religious content is shared and used. Kemp (2020) found that there are 76.38 million human beings who use internet and 37.00 million customers of internet are in Pakistan and 61.34 people of Pakistan use social media and between these 46.00 million are using several social media applications. Social media may look like a new set of cool tools for engaging youth, and while that's fine, some people have really cool new instruments available, but the rise of social media may have more significant effects than that Miller (2021) revealed that consumers of sites proposed by network especially Instagram Facebook are at high risk of unhappiness.

Impact of Internet on Religious Practices on Youth

The effect of social media on student's religious practices in higher education has increased in standing as field of study in recent years. Social media services like Twitter, TikTok, Facebook,

Instagram, and others have completely transformed the way that religious content is shared and used. Social media can have various effects on young people's lives, a few of which have been positive for their social lives, and some of which are detrimental to their users. It affects young people growing up in a time when internet is more about interaction, digital media, and multiple tasks than broadcasting material, like TV, and it affects organizations that must adapt to changing demographic (Anthony, 2009). The researchers raised screen period coordinates beside dropped partnership in holy traditions, in the way that pleading, worship duties, and abstaining. This aspect, called "holy deinstitutionalization" by Taylor (2023), focal points move from composite conscientious faithfulness to analyzed faith wholes. Twenge (2022) explain the impact of "mathematical dopamine" on the scrupulous date, disclosing that friendly publishing supplies next satisfaction, inasmuch as trusty practices frequently demand general obligation and punishment. According to a Pew (2024) study, things one repeatedly catch accompanying public television are more inclined label as as matter of usual practice free ("nones"), skeptic, or nonbeliever.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was conducted using the descriptive method. Additionally, a survey -style study was carried out, using a questionnaire to collect public opinion and impressions of their influence or social media on decline in practices of religion and judgments made about multiple aspects of youth culture. In this linking, the procedural questionnaire method, a sort of methodology used in both social and behavioral sciences inquiries, was used to perform the descriptive research. The study's population consists of the Multan City youth. An approach to stratified sampling worked in choosing 250 young people across the mentioned sample of the Multan youth, including both male and female students from two universities in the Multan City.

RESULTS OF STUDY

The information was evaluated and understood using SPSS. To evaluate the data, separate the findings, and show the data in correct structure, all gathered data has been imported into an SPSS sheet. The diagrams and the tables were then generated. All collected data was entered into specialized social science software packages, analyzed, and presented as table and graph. Statistical procedures were then used for calculating percentages, frequency distributions, and mean scores.

Objective Number 1
Investigate the role of social media decline religious practices and belief among university students.

Table 1
Distraction

SN	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Social media apps disconnect people from customs & families amid youth.	1.63	.836
2	You spend more than two hours a day upon the social media applications.	2.33	1.233
3	Social media reduced people attendance at the religious practices (Namaz).	1.85	.954

4	Social media provide usually gives wrong data about religious practices.	2.31	2.178
5	Usage of social media affects to focus during diverse religious activities.	2.06	1.148

Furthermore, this statements represent the 31.8% of respondents admit to spending more than two hours a day on social media. The study also highlights the worries about spirituality, with 44.3% agreed that social media reduces spiritual involvement in religious practices and 43.9% showing decreased attendance at religious activities such as Namaz. Furthermore, a significant percentage of participants (39.6%) feel that social media gives false information about religious activities, while 35.7% think it gives young people fake religious content. 39.6% of respondents agree, and 32.9% strongly agree, highlighting the evident effect of social media on focus during tasks include Jema'ah, zikr, and majlis. Furthermore, 39.6% of respondents agreed and 28.2% strongly agreed that the platforms could have the detrimental impact on faith involvement. These results highlight how social media use among youngsters can result in negative impacts on their ethnic, religious, as well as spiritual commitment, urging thoughtful consideration and moderation.

Objective Number 2
To evaluate the impact of online communities and religious Engagement in among university students

Table 2
Online Communities & Religious Engagement

SN	Statement	Mean	SD
1	University students participate in the online lessons or lecture sessions.	2.06	1.059
2	Usage of media participation (sports, clubs) reduced physical activities.	2.07	1.071
3	The social media influencers promote the religious values and practices.	2.22	1.238
4	The students adapt their social media feeds for spiritual diverse content.	2.40	1.303
5	Social media campaigns promote religious awareness among the youth.	2.61	1.370

The data show that 36.9% agree, 32.9% strongly agree, because students are actively engaged in online education, proving social media's educational utility. Still, 35.3% agree, especially 37.3% stating with the finding that social media usage has reduced in exercise such as club sports. and 34.5% of students tailor personal media accounts for spiritual content. Thus, 29.4% believe that social media wits assist raise cultural perception, still the viewpoints on this point remain combine.

Investigate the role of social media decline the religious practices and belief among university students.

Table 3
Social Media Decline & Religious Practices

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.118a	16	.174
Likelihood Ratio	21.235	16	.170

Linear-by-Linear Association	.242	1	.623
No. of Valid Cases	255		

The chi-square test table 4.3.2 results show the association between the variables from this data set. The Pearson Chi-Square rating of 21.118, with a total of sixteen levels of freedom, implies there is no statistically significant relationship with parameters (p = 0.174). Also, a likelihood ratio of 21.235 given same amounts of latitude supports this claim (p = 0.17). The linear-by-linear link also yields no findings of significance (p = 0.623). It is worth noting that fifteen cells in total (60.0%) were predicted to have counts that were below 5, with minimal supposed count just 0.02, which may affect trustworthiness of chi-square values. This implies that the outcome distribution cannot fully satisfy what is necessary for test, thereby lowering the potency of the conclusions.

To evaluate the impact of the online communities and religious Engagement among university students.

Table 4
Online Communities & Religious Engagement

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	32.204a	16	.009
Likelihood Ratio	32.578	16	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.134	1	.008
No. of Valid Cases	255		

The chi-square table 4.4.6 representing the reading of 32.204, having a p-value of 0.009, and the odds factor of 32.578, with a p-value of 0.008, indicate statistical significance. Therefore, the logistic-by-linear linkage tests (7.134, p = 0.008) similarly indicate an impressive linear trend. With 255 genuine scenarios, these results show an important association amid variables being studied.

DISCUSSION

The researcher used Likert scales to evaluate effect of social media on young people beliefs. A significant number of respondents (53.7%) felt that the social media separates youth from their loved ones and religious practices. Several people voiced concerns about the negative impact of social media on religious belief, with 44.3% noting increased devotion to religious activities. In addition, 39.6% of those polled agreed that social media often offers inaccurate information about religious activities. This joins alongside existent research suggesting that mathematical policies frequently change evident-experience public interplays, superior to a decline in shared scrupulous practices (Smith, 2025).This supports former studies by Taylor (2024), that climax duty of falsity in forming scrupulous discourse connected to the internet. In this connection, the approachability of unproved conscientious content on planks like YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter has forged together moments for knowledge & risks of ideal guidance (Pew Research, 2025).

Many accused unquestioned charming amid conscientious debates and content to extend their information, upholding the desire that mathematical policies can symbolize academic finishes in hope incident (Campbell & Tsuria, 2025). This shows extensive shift toward secularization with immature era, as noticed in existing sociological studies (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2024). Some stated facing deceptive reliable tales, building up debates that public publishing supports distraction and doubt concerning scrupulous opinion (Lynch & Robbins, 2025). The social media support crook well as People spend lot of time on social media for Activities such as attach with others, think of for information for worries about diminished material date in friendly events to a degree sports and clubs were bred, suggesting that overdone friendly radio use not only impacts moral partnership but impacts wider facets of minority growth (Twenge, 2025).

CONCLUSION

The online availability of different philosophies and worldviews may cause people to question long-held beliefs, leading to decline in ritual attendance and congregational worship. Besides, the fast-paced, often superficial nature of social media interactions can distract from the more contemplative components of religious life. in this connection, at last, social networking has a unique and important impact on the religious customs of advanced college students. As digital platforms dominate communication or observing, students could get more engaged in online groups at the expense of the conventional religious activities. Furthermore, the social dynamics generated in the university settings, driven by the widespread use of social media, can shift priority toward secular engagements, which are frequently focused on the academic and social activities.

As a result, a generation of students may prefer digital connections to the spiritual connections, seeking fulfillment in online communities rather than traditional religious organizations. Last of all, although social media can provide outlets for the religious expression and intercultural conversation, it appears to be having a disadvantage on active participation in religion among university students. As religious institutions adjust to this new framework, it will be critical to investigate novel lines to reconnecting with the population, ensuring that spirituality remains relevant in a becoming increasingly interconnected yet digital world. In brief, still social media offers many kinds of opportunities for religious studies and engagement, it poses problems to established faith traditions among university students. The interaction of digital and physical domains has created a new landscape in which beliefs shift and spiritual commitments might weaken.

Future Research

Future research should involve a greater number of university students across various areas, cultures, and backgrounds of faith to improve generalizability. Conduct longitudinal studies to examine shifting faith habits over time and evaluate the changing impact caused by internet. Combining quantitative surveys as well as qualitative interviews offers more detailed insights into the reasons behind students' and personal experiences with social media and religion. The prospective studies should compare the various electronic communication platforms and their

respective effects on religious practice in diverse situations and contexts for new outcomes. For example, how could TikTok impact religious rituals better than Facebook & Instagram for first time.

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