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# Navigating Digital Stress: A Rasch Analysis of Social Media Impact and Psychological Readiness among Female Teachers in Islamic Schools

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## Abstract

This study investigates the psychological impact of social media on female teachers in Islamic schools and their readiness to manage its negative effects. Using a mixed-methods design and Rasch model analysis, data were collected from 621 teachers across diverse Indonesian regions. The findings reveal significant variations in perceived mental health impact and coping readiness based on age, education level, region, and social media usage patterns. Teachers with high engagement, especially on visual platforms like Instagram and TikTok, reported increased psychological stress. Rasch-based DIF analysis highlighted item-level disparities across demographic subgroups. The study offers a novel contribution by integrating Islamic concepts *maqashid syariah*, *fitrah*, and *ihsan* into the interpretation of digital mental health, emphasizing the spiritual and cultural dimensions of resilience. The results underscore the importance of culturally sensitive interventions that support both psychological well-being and religious identity. Limitations include the study's cross-sectional nature and context-specific sample.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Female Teachers, Mental Health, Islamic Education, Rasch Model

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, social media has become an integral part of daily life, significantly impacting various aspects of mental health, including among educators. While numerous studies have identified the effects of social media on mental health, most of these studies focus on adolescents or the general population, with less attention paid to the impact on teachers, particularly female teachers. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how female teachers in Islamic schools face the negative impact of social media on their mental health. Female teachers in Islamic schools face unique challenges not experienced by their male counterparts. In many contexts, women are seen as custodians of morality and family image within society [1], [2], [3]. In the case of female teachers in Islamic schools, this expectation becomes even more significant, as they are not only expected to be professional educators but also serve as moral exemplars for their students [4], [5], [6], [7]. For instance, Tian et al. [8] found that women are more vulnerable to stress due to social comparison on social media, a phenomenon that is amplified when they are expected to uphold social and religious norms.

Research on the negative effects of social media on the mental health of female teachers in Islamic schools is crucial because it highlights the unique pressures faced by this group. According to Pedalino & Camerini [9], women are more likely to experience anxiety due to social comparison and image concerns on social media compared to men, and this is exacerbated by societal expectations. Female teachers in Islamic schools often face a dual role: they are expected to maintain an image that aligns with religious and moral values, while simultaneously fulfilling the professional demands of being an educator [10]. This unique intersection of roles creates additional psychological strain that can affect their mental health. Furthermore, studies have consistently shown that excessive use of social media can negatively impact mental health. Keles et al. [11] identified a significant relationship between social media use and increased levels of depression and anxiety. This is particularly relevant for female teachers in Islamic schools, who must balance the demands of maintaining their professional identity with the pressure to conform to social and religious expectations. Landa-Blanco et al. [18] also found that social media use can exacerbate feelings of dissatisfaction with oneself, leading to psychological distress that negatively impacts performance, including in educational settings.

The use of the Rasch Model for data analysis in this study aims to provide a more detailed understanding of how female teachers in Islamic schools manage the psychological impacts of social media. The Rasch Model is ideal for analyzing ordinal data, such as Likert-scale responses, allowing for the precise measurement of the readiness of female teachers to cope with stress associated with social media [13]. This method will be used to assess the reliability and validity of the instruments measuring anxiety, stress, and coping strategies employed by female teachers. This research is essential because it seeks to understand in greater depth how social media impacts the mental well-being of female teachers in Islamic schools. Female teachers in these settings face the added challenge of not only being educators but also moral role models within their communities, where there are heightened expectations regarding their behavior. Understanding how they cope with social media pressures can help inform the development of targeted support programs that can alleviate mental health strains. As such, this study is not only relevant to improving the mental well-being of teachers but also contributes

to enhancing the quality of education in Islamic schools by fostering a healthier and more supportive work environment for female educators.

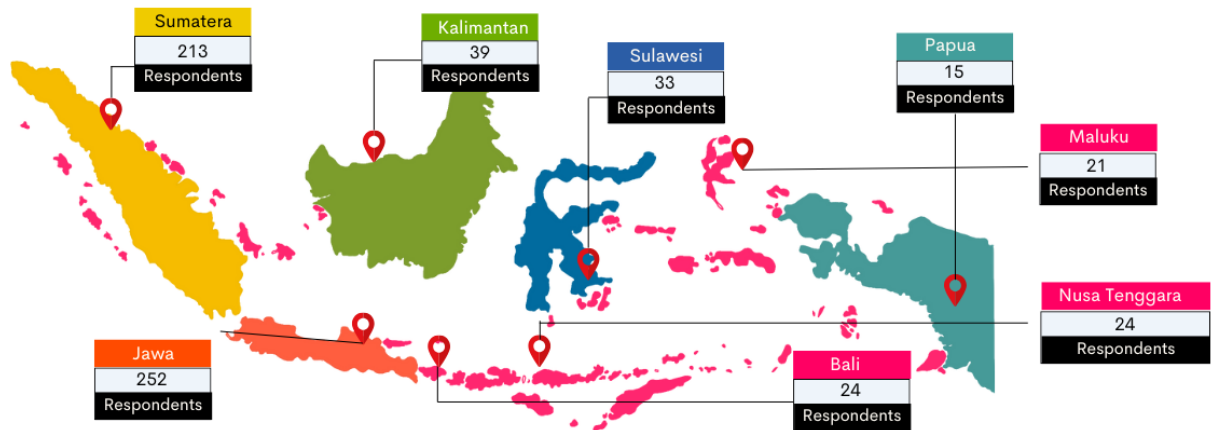
## METHODS

### *Instrument*

The main instruments used in this study include a demographic questionnaire, a scale to measure the impact of social media on mental health, and a scale to assess the participants' readiness to cope with these negative effects. The demographic questionnaire includes questions about the participants' age, marital status, highest level of education, years of teaching experience, teaching level, type of school, and place of teaching. Additionally, the questionnaire gathers information on social media use, such as how often participants use social media per day, how many platforms they actively engage with, and the most frequently used platform. The scale designed to measure the impact of social media on mental health includes 11 items addressing feelings of anxiety, stress, self-esteem, and emotional responses to social media usage. These questions focus on how social media contributes to stress, social comparison, and self-doubt. The readiness scale consists of 4 items to evaluate how confident the participants feel in managing stress caused by social media, their coping strategies, and the support systems they have in place.

### *Participant*

The participants in this study consist of 621 female teachers from Islamic schools across various regions of Indonesia, selected through purposive sampling to ensure relevance to the study's objectives. The sample was chosen to represent a diverse range of demographic characteristics, including age, teaching experience, and geographic location. The majority of participants are in the 20-30 age group (55.4%), followed by those aged 31-40 years (23.1%). The teachers' teaching experience varies, with the largest group having 1-5 years of experience (57.8%), and a smaller percentage with 6-10 years (21.9%) or over 16 years of experience (18.4%). Most participants hold a Bachelor's degree (82.5%), with fewer having completed Master's (13.7%) or Doctorate (1.4%) levels of education. In terms of marital status, the majority of participants are married (65.3%), followed by those who are single (31.5%) and a small proportion who are widowed (3.2%). Regarding their work environment, most participants are employed in private schools (74.0%) as opposed to public schools (26.0%), and the majority teach at the junior high school level (51.9%), followed by those at the elementary school (31.4%) and senior high school levels (16.7%).



**Figure 1.** Demographic Distribution of Female Teachers in Islamic Schools across Indonesia

Geographically, the participants are spread across several islands in Indonesia. The largest proportion resides in Java (41.3%), followed by Sumatra (34.8%), Kalimantan (6.4%), Sulawesi (5.4%), Bali (3.9%), Nusa Tenggara (3.9%), Maluku (3.4%), and Papua (2.4%). This broad geographic representation helps to capture the diversity of experiences and challenges faced by female teachers in different regions, adding depth to the understanding of how social media impacts their mental health and coping strategies across varying cultural and geographic contexts. Social media use is a prominent aspect of the participants' daily lives, with most using 3 social media platforms (70.1%), and Instagram being the most frequently used platform (48.1%). Other popular platforms include Facebook (19.5%), TikTok (14.2%), and YouTube (9.1%). This diverse range of participants allows for a comprehensive understanding of how social media impacts female teachers in Islamic schools across different demographic groups, helping to identify patterns and variances in their experiences with social media and its effects on their mental health.

**Table 1.** Demographics of Female Teachers in Islamic Schools Across Indonesia

Demographics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Place of Residence	Java	252	41.3%
	Sumatra	213	34.8%
	Kalimantan	39	6.4%
	Sulawesi	33	5.4%
	Bali	24	3.9%
	Nusa Tenggara	24	3.9%
	Maluku	21	3.4%
	Papua	15	2.4%
Age Group	20–30 years	339	55.4%
	31–40 years	141	23.1%
	41–50 years	84	13.7%
	> 51 years	57	7.8%
Teaching Experience	1–5 years	354	57.8%
	6–10 years	132	21.9%
	11–15 years	24	4.3%
	> 16 years	111	18.4%
Highest Education Level	Bachelor (S1)	504	82.5%
	Master (S2)	108	13.7%
	Doctorate (S3)	9	1.4%
Marital Status	Married	399	65.3%

Demographics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Single	192	31.5%
	Widowed	30	3.2%
Type of School	Private	462	74.0%
	Public	159	26.0%
Place of Teaching	Private	462	74.0%
	Public	159	26.0%
Teaching Level	MI (Elementary School)	192	31.4%
	MTs (Junior High School)	318	51.9%
	MA (Senior High School)	111	16.7%
Number of Active Social Media Platforms	2 platforms	174	26.3%
	3 platforms	429	70.1%
	4 platforms	18	3.6%
Most Used Social Media	Instagram	294	48.1%
	Facebook	114	19.5%
	TikTok	87	14.2%
	YouTube	60	9.1%
	WhatsApp	45	6.7%
	Twitter	21	3.3%
Daily Social Media Usage Frequency	1–2 hours	3	0.48%
	5–6 hours	438	70.53%
	3–4 hours	123	19.81%
	> 6 hours	57	9.18%

### *Measurement Model and Data Analysis*

The data were analyzed using the Rasch model via WINSTEPS 5.2.3.0 to assess the psychometric validity of the instrument. The analysis evaluated item fit, person fit, construct validity, item difficulty, and response patterns, confirming that all items measured a single construct [14]. Reliability indices were calculated with a threshold of 0.67 or higher [15]. Differential Item Functioning (DIF) analysis was conducted based on gender, geographic location, and teaching experience to detect any response bias, with significant DIF values ( $p < 0.05$ ) examined for fairness across groups. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions, were calculated using SPSS version 27 to assess female teachers' readiness to manage social media's negative impact on mental health.

### *Validity and Reliability of the Instrument*

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument used in this study, several statistical analyses were conducted. Construct validity was assessed using INFIT and OUTFIT mean square (MNSQ) values, confirming that all items in the questionnaire measured teacher readiness to address the negative effects of social media on mental health. The analysis also included unidimensionality testing, verifying that the questionnaire measured a single latent trait, namely, the readiness of female teachers in Islamic schools to tackle these challenges. Items with MNSQ values outside the acceptable range of 0.5–1.5 were reviewed and adjusted to ensure their relevance to the overall measurement [15], [16]. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha > 0.70$ ), along with person and item reliability indices. Values above 0.67 indicated strong measurement stability, confirming that the instrument consistently measured readiness across participants. The item-person separation index was also evaluated to ensure the instrument's ability to differentiate between teachers at varying levels of readiness to handle

the impacts of social media. Differential Item Functioning (DIF) analysis was performed across gender, geographic location, and teaching experience to detect potential response biases. Items showing significant DIF values ( $p < 0.05$ ) were flagged for further analysis to ensure fairness across subgroups. This process ensured that the instrument provided an unbiased measure of readiness, irrespective of the participants' background or regional differences [15], [16]. The results of these validation techniques confirm that the instrument is psychometrically sound and reliable, providing valid insights into the readiness of female teachers in Islamic schools to manage the negative effects of social media on mental health. The findings offer valuable guidance for educational policymakers and teacher training programs, particularly in regions where there are varying levels of exposure to and support for addressing mental health in the context of digital challenges.

**Table 2.** Measurement Model and Data Analysis Summary

Metric	Person	Item
N	621	15
Mean	3.267633	3.267633
SD	0.753540	0.753540
Separation	15.500000	1.000000
Reliability	0.996000	0.500000
Cronbach's Alpha	0.920000	–
Chi-squared ( $\chi^2$ )	122240.000000	–
Outfit MNSQ: Mean	1.050000	1.050000
Outfit MNSQ: SD	0.710000	0.300000

**Table 3.** Response Distribution on Likert Scale

Category Label	Count	Frequency %	SE	Rasch-Andrich Threshold
1 (Strongly disagree)	72	0.78%	0.028056	None
2 (Disagree)	1,611	17.36%	0.028056	-2.25
3 (Neutral)	4,335	46.72%	0.028056	-0.90
4 (Agree)	2,202	23.73%	0.028056	+0.75
5 (Strongly agree)	1,059	11.41%	0.028056	+2.30

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Demographic Profile and Readiness of Female Teachers to Cope with Social Media Impact*

The demographic profile of respondents reveals that the majority of pre-service teachers are female (61.77%) and aged between 26–35 years (45.82%), indicating a youthful and diverse teaching population. Most respondents are enrolled in undergraduate programs (62.31%), which suggests a solid foundation in educational theory, though limited exposure to advanced pedagogical models like deep learning. The analysis of teacher readiness to manage the negative impact of social media on mental health highlights that many teachers fall within Level IV (between the mean and  $-1SD$ ) for readiness to deal with these challenges, specifically for items RDN3 and RDN4, while only a few fall within Level II (RDN1). As for the impact of social media, the majority of respondents fall within Level III (between the mean and  $+1SD$ ) for items ISM3 through ISM9, indicating moderate recognition of social media's effects. However, a smaller proportion of teachers indicated a high impact (Level V) for items ISM10 and ISM11, suggesting a less acute awareness or engagement with the issue. This data supports earlier research indicating that while awareness of digital tools and social media's effects is

growing, practical readiness to address these challenges, especially in less-resourced areas, remains uneven [17], [18], [19].

**Table 4.** Item Difficulty Levels for Social Media Impact and Readiness to Cope

Task	Level I ( $\geq$ Mean + 2SD)	Level II (Between Mean +1SD and +2SD)	Level III (Between Mean and +1SD)	Level IV (Between Mean and -1SD)	Level V (< Mean - 1SD)
Impact of Social Media on Mental Health (ISM)	-	-	ISM1, ISM2	ISM3, ISM4, ISM5, ISM6, ISM7, ISM8, ISM9	ISM10, ISM11
Readiness to Deal with Negative Impacts (RDN)	-	RDN1	RDN2	RDN3, RDN4	-

**Table 5.** Demographic Distribution and Social Media Usage by Readiness Levels

Demographics	Category	Very High	High	Moderate	Low
Place of Residence	Java	25	75	100	52
	Sumatra	21	63	85	44
	Kalimantan	3	11	15	10
	Sulawesi	3	9	13	8
	Bali	2	7	9	6
	Nusa Tenggara	2	7	9	6
	Maluku	2	6	8	5
	Papua	1	4	6	4
Age Group	20–30 years	33	101	135	70
	31–40 years	14	42	56	29
	41–50 years	8	25	33	18
	> 51 years	5	17	22	13
Teaching Experience	1–5 years	35	106	141	72
	6–10 years	13	39	52	28
	> 16 years	11	33	44	23
	11–15 years	2	7	9	6
Highest Education Level	Bachelor (S1)	50	151	201	102
	Master (S2)	10	32	43	23
	Doctorate (S3)	0	2	3	4
Marital Status	Married	39	119	159	82
	Single	19	57	76	40
	Widowed	3	9	12	6
Type of School	Private	46	138	184	94
	Public	15	47	63	34
Place of Teaching	Private	46	138	184	94
	Public	15	47	63	34
Teaching Level	MTs (Junior High School)	31	95	127	65
	MI (Elementary School)	19	57	76	40
	MA (Senior High School)	11	33	44	23
Number of Active Social Media Platforms	3 platforms	42	128	171	88
	2 platforms	17	52	69	36
	4 platforms	1	5	7	5
Most Used Social Media	Instagram	29	88	117	60
	Facebook	11	34	45	24
	TikTok	8	26	34	19

Demographics	Category	Very High	High	Moderate	Low
	YouTube	6	18	24	12
	WhatsApp	4	13	18	10
	Twitter	2	6	8	5
Daily Social Media Usage Frequency	1–2 hours	1	1	1	-
	3–4 hours	31	31	31	30
	5–6 hours	110	110	109	109
	> 6 hours	15	14	14	14

Based on Table 5, the demographic profile of respondents reveals key insights into the readiness of pre-service teachers to manage the negative impacts of social media on mental health. In terms of Place of Residence, respondents from Java exhibit the highest levels of preparedness, with 25 in the Very High and 75 in the High categories. In contrast, respondents from regions like Papua show lower readiness, with only 1 in the Very High and 4 in the Low categories. This highlights regional disparities in preparedness. Regarding Age Groups, pre-service teachers aged 20–30 years show the most readiness, with 33 in the Very High and 101 in the High categories. However, older age groups, such as those aged 31–40 years (14 in Very High, 42 in High), and particularly those over 51 years (5 in Very High, 17 in High), demonstrate lower readiness, indicating that younger teachers may be more adaptable to modern pedagogical approaches like deep learning.

For Teaching Experience, those with 1–5 years of experience are more concentrated in the Very High and High categories, with 35 in Very High and 106 in High. In contrast, teachers with 6–10 years of experience (13 in Very High, 39 in High) and those with over 16 years of experience (11 in Very High, 33 in High) show a decline in readiness, suggesting that more experienced teachers may find it more challenging to implement new methodologies. In terms of Education Level, Bachelor's (S1) respondents are more likely to fall into the Moderate and Low categories, with 50 in Very High and 151 in High, indicating a solid foundation but a gap in preparedness for advanced pedagogical strategies. Master's (S2) students show a more balanced distribution, with 10 in Very High, 32 in High, and 43 in Moderate, reflecting a higher level of readiness. Doctoral (S3) respondents, though fewer in number, are concentrated in the High category, suggesting that higher education enhances confidence in applying deep learning strategies. Looking at Marital Status, married teachers show a higher concentration in the Very High and High categories, with 39 in Very High and 119 in High, compared to single (19 in Very High, 57 in High) and widowed teachers (3 in Very High, 9 in High). This suggests that life experience may play a role in preparedness. Finally, regarding Social Media Usage, teachers who use 3 platforms show higher readiness, with 42 in the Very High and 128 in the High categories. Conversely, those who use 4 platforms have lower readiness, with only 1 in Very High and 5 in High. Respondents who use Instagram most frequently demonstrate higher preparedness, with 29 in the Very High and 88 in the High categories, highlighting the influence of social media familiarity on readiness.

## Differential Item Functioning (DIF) Analysis by Demographics, Social Media Usage, and Awareness

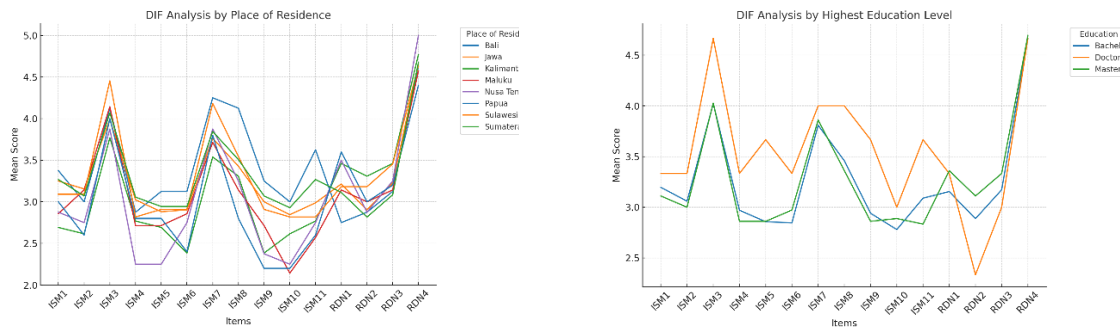
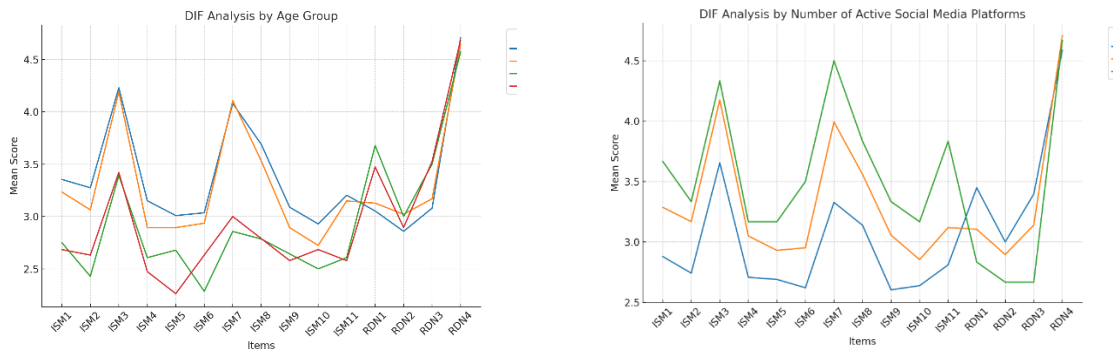


Figure 2. DIF by Place of Residence and Highest Education Level

Based on Figure 2, the DIF analysis by place of residence demonstrates significant variability in the mean scores across items measuring the ISM and RDN. Notably, items such as ISM3 and ISM7 consistently exhibit higher mean scores across most regions, suggesting a strong and shared perception of these indicators among respondents, while items like ISM4, ISM5, ISM9, and ISM10 tend to reflect lower scores, particularly among participants from Kalimantan, Papua, and Nusa Tenggara. In contrast, respondents from Java and Sumatra generally show higher levels of awareness and readiness, particularly in items ISM3, ISM7, and RDN4. These patterns suggest the presence of DIF and highlight regional disparities in how social media impacts mental health and how well-prepared individuals are to cope with its negative consequences. These findings align with previous research by Batra et al. [20], which emphasized the role of socio-cultural and regional factors in shaping individuals' digital behaviors and psychological responses to online stressors. Similarly, a study by Wen & Tian [21] found that digital literacy and access to mental health support varied widely across geographic regions, influencing how communities respond to the mental health challenges posed by social media. The present analysis extends these discussions by offering empirical evidence of item-level response differences, emphasizing the need for geographically sensitive intervention programs and policies that recognize the nuanced ways in which digital environments affect mental health across diverse populations.

The DIF analysis by highest education level reveals distinct disparities in the perception of the ISM and RDN. Respondents holding doctoral degrees (S3) consistently reported higher mean scores on several ISM items, particularly ISM3, ISM7, and ISM8, indicating heightened awareness and sensitivity to the psychological ramifications of social media. In contrast, those with master's (S2) and bachelor's (S1) degrees exhibited more stable but comparatively lower scores, suggesting a more moderated perception of social media's influence. Notably, a sharp decline in the mean score for item RDN2 among doctoral respondents suggests a potential disconnect between their elevated awareness of social media's risks and their actual preparedness to manage its negative effects. This phenomenon aligns with the findings of Norabuena-Figueroa et al. [22], who observed that higher educational attainment may be accompanied by increased exposure to digital stressors without a proportional increase in adaptive coping mechanisms. Moreover, Sala et al. [23] highlighted that while education enhances digital literacy, it does not inherently guarantee resilience or psychological readiness.

These findings underscore the necessity of tailoring digital mental health interventions not only to regional contexts but also to the educational profiles of target populations, ensuring a more nuanced and effective approach to digital well-being.

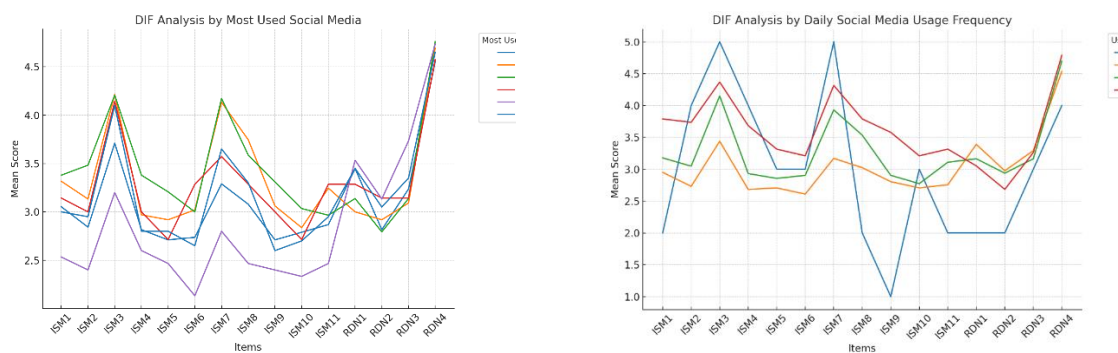


**Figure 3.** DIF by Age Group and Number of Active Social Media Platforms

Based on Figure 3, the DIF analysis by age group indicates notable divergences in how respondents perceive the ISM and their RDN. The younger age group (20–30 years) consistently reports higher mean scores on several key ISM items especially ISM3 and ISM7 suggesting greater sensitivity and awareness of social media’s psychological effects. This pattern gradually declines with age, as the 41–50 years and >51 years cohorts show lower mean scores across most ISM items, implying either reduced exposure, lower perceived relevance, or limited digital engagement among older respondents. Interestingly, while the younger cohort dominates ISM scores, item RDN1 shows a spike among the 41–50 years group, indicating a comparatively higher level of readiness in addressing social media’s negative impact within this demographic possibly due to their life experience or professional maturity. The >51 group, though showing overall lower ISM scores, reaches parity with other groups in RDN4, suggesting shared concern and preparedness on that particular dimension. These findings corroborate prior studies such as those by Pérez-Torres [24], who emphasize the heightened vulnerability of younger individuals to digital environments due to their more frequent usage and identity development processes within social media spaces. Conversely, Valkenburg et al. [25] noted that older users often exhibit more passive or instrumental use of social platforms, which may explain their lower emotional engagement or concern across ISM items. The data thus reinforce the critical importance of age-sensitive strategies in promoting digital mental health, with targeted interventions addressing the unique vulnerabilities and strengths of each age cohort.

The DIF analysis by the Number of Active Social Media Platforms illustrates a clear positive association between the number of platforms used and respondents’ scores on both ISM and RDN. Individuals who actively use four platforms consistently report the highest mean scores across nearly all ISM items particularly ISM3, ISM6, and ISM7 suggesting that increased exposure to diverse digital environments intensifies both the perceived psychological impact and the awareness of related risks. In contrast, those who use only two platforms exhibit the lowest mean scores across most items, indicating relatively lower levels of perceived mental health impact and readiness. The steep differences between the groups are especially pronounced in items such as ISM7 and ISM11, where users of four platforms significantly

outperform their peers, potentially reflecting both greater engagement with social media and heightened cognitive-emotional awareness. Meanwhile, for RDN items, a similar trend emerges: higher platform usage correlates with slightly increased readiness levels, although the gap is narrower compared to ISM items. These results support existing literature, such as the findings of Wolfers & Utz [42], who reported that individuals with higher social media engagement are more likely to experience both the adverse effects and adaptive responses associated with digital stress. Likewise, Wang et al. [40] emphasized that frequent platform switching amplifies emotional strain while simultaneously fostering a heightened sense of vigilance and coping behavior. Collectively, this analysis reinforces the idea that digital saturation increases not only the psychological burden but also the potential for self-regulatory awareness highlighting the importance of media literacy programs tailored to multi-platform users.



**Figure 4.** DIF by Most Used Social Media and Daily Social Media Usage Frequency

Based on Figure 4, the DIF analysis by Most Used Social Media Platform reveals substantial variability in the perceived ISM and the RDN across different platform users. Respondents who primarily use TikTok and Instagram consistently report the highest mean scores on several ISM items particularly ISM3, ISM6, and ISM7 suggesting that highly visual and fast-paced platforms may intensify users' emotional and cognitive engagement, resulting in heightened awareness of mental health implications. Conversely, WhatsApp users show the lowest mean scores across nearly all ISM items, particularly ISM4 through ISM10, reflecting either reduced exposure to stressful social content or a different usage pattern more focused on direct communication rather than public engagement. Interestingly, YouTube and Facebook users tend to occupy a middle ground, with moderate scores on both ISM and RDN items, indicating a more balanced perception of impact and coping readiness. Notably, Twitter users demonstrate relatively high scores on RDN1 and RDN4, possibly reflecting the platform's culture of rapid information exchange and critical discourse, which may enhance users' preparedness to navigate online negativity. These findings align with previous studies such as Tandon et al. [28], who observed that the type of social media platform significantly influences psychological outcomes, with platforms emphasizing visual content and algorithm-driven engagement (e.g., TikTok, Instagram) more likely to trigger emotional responses and social comparison. Furthermore, Shahzad et al. [29] noted that frequent exposure to curated content on these platforms could heighten anxiety and perceived social pressure, thereby amplifying

users' mental health concerns. The differentiated patterns in this analysis underscore the need for platform-specific strategies in promoting mental health awareness and digital resilience.

The DIF analysis by Daily Social Media Usage Frequency highlights a strong correlation between usage intensity and the perceived ISM as well as RDN. Respondents who engage with social media for more than 6 hours daily consistently report higher mean scores across both ISM and RDN items, particularly ISM3, ISM7, and ISM8, indicating elevated awareness and potentially increased psychological exposure to social media's effects. In contrast, those with only 1–2 hours of usage exhibit extreme score fluctuations spiking on items like ISM3 and ISM7 but dropping drastically on others, such as ISM8 and ISM10, even reaching the lowest point on the entire graph. This erratic pattern among low-usage respondents suggests inconsistent or selective engagement with digital content, which may lead to fragmented perceptions of social media's impact. Meanwhile, the more stable trends among users with 3–6 hours of daily use reflect a more consistent and measured interaction, resulting in moderate but reliable scores. Interestingly, for the RDN domain, especially RDN4, all groups converge at relatively high scores, suggesting a shared perception of the importance of readiness, regardless of daily usage volume. These findings are consistent with the work of Alsunni & Latif [30], who found that excessive social media use is associated with heightened emotional investment and perceived stress, while also fostering a stronger awareness of potential harms. Additionally, da Silva et al. [31] argue that longer exposure times can lead to either digital fatigue or greater digital literacy depending on the nature of content consumed and users' coping mechanisms. The observed patterns underscore the need for differentiated digital wellness interventions based on usage frequency, targeting both overexposed individuals and those at risk of disengaged or uncritical media consumption.

## *Discussion*

This study contributes significantly to the growing body of scholarship examining the psychological effects of social media, particularly within the context of female teachers in Islamic educational institutions an area that remains underrepresented in current literature. Our findings confirm prior research that excessive social media use is associated with increased psychological stress, including anxiety, low self-esteem, and social comparison [32], [33], [34]. Notably, teachers who frequently use visually intensive platforms such as Instagram and TikTok reported higher sensitivity to mental health stressors, particularly on items ISM3, ISM6, and ISM7. This reinforces the observation by Hendry [35] that curated visual content intensifies emotional responses and feelings of inadequacy, especially among female users. The Rasch-based DIF analysis further revealed substantial disparities across education levels, age groups, and regional contexts. For instance, while doctoral-educated respondents demonstrated greater awareness of social media risks, their readiness to mitigate these effects (e.g., RDN2) was not necessarily higher echoing Ramos-Vera et al. [36], who emphasized that higher academic attainment may correlate with increased exposure to stressors but not always stronger coping skills. Regionally, respondents from Java and Sumatra showed significantly higher readiness and awareness scores than their peers in Papua or Maluku, underscoring socio-digital inequalities noted by Badr et al. [37]. These findings highlight the importance of localized interventions that account for geographic, technological, and cultural disparities in digital mental health education.

One of the key academic contributions of this study lies in its application of rasch psychometric analysis to the context of religious female educators an underexplored population in mental health research. By uncovering item-level patterns of psychological readiness and vulnerability, this research bridges gaps between digital mental health, Islamic educational studies, and psychometric measurement. The study enriches educational psychology by offering a more granular understanding of how demographic and digital engagement variables interact with mental health awareness and coping capacity. Methodologically, this research demonstrates the value of rasch modeling in ensuring the unidimensionality and fairness of instruments across subgroups, which future scholars may replicate in similar culturally bounded contexts. In addition to its empirical and methodological contributions, this study also engages with Islamic theoretical frameworks to contextualize the psychological experience of female educators. The challenges these teachers face can be interpreted through the lens of *maqashid syariah*, particularly the objective of safeguarding mental well-being (*hifz al-'aql*) [38]. The observed psychological strain suggests a misalignment between the moral expectations placed on female educators and the psychosocial support provided to them. Moreover, the strength shown in specific readiness indicators (e.g., RDN4) may reflect the principle of *ihsan* the Islamic virtue of striving for excellence despite adversity. This spiritual dimension could be harnessed as a foundation for culturally sensitive mental health interventions that integrate psychological training with Islamic values [39], [40].

Islamic thought also affirms the *fitrah* of women their innate emotional depth, empathy, and nurturing qualities which, when properly supported, can serve as strengths rather than vulnerabilities [41], [42]. Instead of perceiving emotional sensitivity as a liability, it should be embraced as part of a holistic model of well-being grounded in Islamic psychology. Such integration is largely absent from existing frameworks of digital mental health, making this study a novel contribution to the intersection of gender, religion, and psychological resilience in education. Despite its strengths, this study has several limitations. First, the exclusive focus on female teachers in Islamic schools in Indonesia limits the generalizability of findings to other religious or secular education settings. Second, the reliance on self-reported data may be susceptible to social desirability bias, particularly in a context where teachers are expected to conform to religious and moral ideals. Third, the cross-sectional design precludes longitudinal inferences regarding the development of coping strategies over time. Future research should consider expanding the sample to include male teachers or comparative analyses with other religious traditions. Qualitative inquiries could also deepen our understanding of lived experiences and coping narratives. Furthermore, longitudinal studies are needed to examine how psychological readiness evolves with changes in digital exposure, institutional culture, and socio-religious expectations. Finally, the design of digital wellness programs that integrate Islamic values and psychological support should be explored to provide sustainable interventions for religious educators facing the pressures of the digital age.

## CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that female teachers in Islamic schools face multifaceted psychological challenges resulting from social media engagement, with notable disparities in readiness and impact perception across regions, educational backgrounds, age groups, and usage patterns. The use of Rasch-based DIF analysis provided robust evidence of differential item functioning, revealing

that increased exposure to digital platforms correlates with both heightened vulnerability and varying levels of preparedness. Grounded in both psychometric rigor and Islamic theoretical frameworks such as *maqashid syariah*, *fitrah*, and *ihsan* this study offers a novel contribution to the intersection of educational psychology, digital mental health, and religious pedagogy. The findings call for culturally tailored mental health interventions and underscore the importance of integrating spiritual values with psychological support mechanisms to strengthen the digital resilience of female educators in Islamic contexts.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

"The authors declare no conflict of interest."

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