

Sholawat as a Spiritual Counseling Medium for Adolescent Mental Health Based on Trends and Patterns of Use on Digital Platforms

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of digital media has transformed religious practices among adolescents, enabling spiritual engagement through online platforms. This study investigates the role of digital sholawat engagement in supporting adolescent mental health through psychospiritual mechanisms. A quantitative netnographic design was employed to analyze 1,765 publicly accessible sholawat contents distributed across YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Spotify, and X between January 2020 and December 2025. A total of 8,675 adolescent-generated interactions were examined to identify patterns of engagement and psychological responses. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4 was applied to evaluate the relationships among Digital Sholawat Engagement (DSE), Self-Compassion (SC), Emotional Regulation (ER), and Mental Health (MH). The findings revealed a substantial increase in digital sholawat consumption and interaction over the observation period. Thematic analysis showed that emotional calmness, stress reduction, and spiritual connectedness were the most dominant outcomes reported by adolescents. The structural model demonstrated significant positive relationships between DSE and SC ($\beta = 0.345$, $p < 0.001$), DSE and ER ($\beta = 0.412$, $p < 0.001$), SC and ER ($\beta = 0.287$, $p < 0.001$), SC and MH ($\beta = 0.389$, $p < 0.001$), and ER and MH ($\beta = 0.361$, $p < 0.001$). The model explained 45.8% of the variance in adolescent mental health. These findings indicate that digital sholawat functions as a culturally relevant psychospiritual resource that promotes self-compassion, strengthens emotional regulation, and contributes positively to adolescent mental health. The study offers empirical evidence for integrating digital spirituality into preventive mental health interventions and adolescent counseling practices.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital technology has significantly transformed the psychological, social, and spiritual experiences of adolescents worldwide. As members of the most digitally connected generation, adolescents increasingly rely on social media platforms, online communities, streaming services, and digital communication networks to construct identity, express emotions, and seek psychosocial support. While digital connectivity offers numerous educational and social benefits, growing evidence indicates that excessive exposure to digital environments is associated with heightened risks of anxiety, depression, loneliness, emotional dysregulation, cyberbullying, and identity confusion among young people (Aggarwal et al.,

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2023; Valkenburg et al., 2022). Consequently, adolescent mental health has emerged as one of the most urgent global public health concerns of the twenty-first century.

Best et al. (2021) recent reports indicate that most mental health disorders develop before the age of twenty-five, yet a substantial proportion of adolescents do not receive adequate psychological assistance. Multiple barriers including stigma toward mental health services, limited access to counseling, financial constraints, and low mental health literacy continue to prevent young people from seeking professional help. Simultaneously, adolescents increasingly turn to digital platforms as alternative spaces for emotional expression, self-disclosure, and psychological support (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). This phenomenon has encouraged scholars to reconsider how counseling approaches can be adapted to contemporary digital cultures and youth communication patterns.

The growing mental health crisis among adolescents has stimulated interest in holistic counseling approaches that integrate psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of human well-being (Loades et al; 2020; Vannucci et al; 2017). Contemporary mental health frameworks increasingly acknowledge spirituality as a significant protective factor that contributes to emotional resilience, self-regulation, meaning-making, and psychological well-being. Numerous studies have demonstrated that spirituality and religiosity can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety while enhancing positive coping strategies among adolescents and emerging adults (Aggarwal et al., 2023; Domhardt et al; 2021). Within this perspective, spiritual counseling has gained recognition as a complementary intervention capable of addressing both emotional distress and existential concerns among youth.

Within Muslim societies, spirituality occupies a central role in everyday life and significantly influences perceptions of mental health, emotional well-being, and personal identity. Islamic spirituality provides a framework through which individuals interpret suffering, cultivate resilience, and establish meaningful connections with God (King & Boyatzis, 2020). Research has consistently shown that Islamic spiritual practices contribute positively to stress management, emotional stability, psychological adjustment, and life satisfaction among adolescents and young adults (Utari & Hamid, 2021; Anggraini, 2024). As a result, the integration of Islamic spirituality into counseling interventions has become an increasingly important area of inquiry within contemporary Islamic psychology and counseling studies.

One of the most prominent spiritual practices in Islam is sholawat, the recitation of blessings and praises upon Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Beyond its theological significance, sholawat embodies psychological and emotional dimensions that may contribute to mental well-being. The repetitive nature of recitation, the cultivation of spiritual awareness, emotional attachment to prophetic values, and the experience of transcendental connectedness may collectively generate calming and restorative psychological effects. From the perspective of spiritual counseling, sholawat may function as a therapeutic medium that facilitates emotional regulation, reduces psychological tension, and strengthens inner peace through spiritual engagement (Nasim & Kausar, 2020).

Recent developments in neuroscience, psychology of religion, and contemplative studies suggest that repetitive spiritual practices can influence cognitive processing, autonomic nervous system regulation, and emotional stability. Spiritual recitation practices have been associated with reductions in stress responses, improvements in mindfulness, and increased psychological resilience. In Islamic contexts, studies examining Qur'anic recitation, dhikr, prayer, and other devotional activities have reported positive impacts on mental health

outcomes, including lower anxiety levels, enhanced coping capacity, and improved subjective well-being (Cetinkaya & Billings, 2024; Owens et al; 2023). These findings indicate that Islamic spiritual practices possess substantial therapeutic potential that warrants further scholarly exploration.

Despite the growing body of literature on Islamic spirituality and mental health, existing studies predominantly focus on general religiosity, Qur'anic recitation, prayer, or dhikr interventions. Comparatively little attention has been devoted to investigating sholawat as a distinct psychospiritual counseling medium, particularly within adolescent populations. This limitation reveals a significant research gap because sholawat occupies a unique position in contemporary Muslim culture and has experienced unprecedented popularity through digital media ecosystems. Consequently, further research is necessary to understand how sholawat contributes to psychological well-being and how it may be integrated into spiritual counseling frameworks for adolescents.

The emergence of digital platforms has fundamentally transformed the way religious and spiritual practices are consumed, experienced, and disseminated. Platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Spotify, and podcast networks have become major channels through which adolescents engage with religious content (Rideout & Fox, 2021). In recent years, sholawat performances, digital majelis gatherings, Islamic music streaming, short-form devotional videos, and online spiritual communities have attracted millions of viewers and listeners across the Muslim world. These developments indicate that digital platforms are increasingly functioning not only as entertainment spaces but also as environments for spiritual engagement and emotional support (Lim et al; 2022).

The popularity of digital sholawat content reflects broader shifts in youth spirituality within the digital age. Adolescents are no longer confined to traditional religious spaces when seeking spiritual experiences; instead, they increasingly encounter religious guidance, emotional comfort, and spiritual inspiration through algorithm-driven digital environments. Research on digital da'wah demonstrates that online Islamic content can serve as an important source of psychological and spiritual support for young people facing emotional stress, social pressure, and identity-related challenges (Helmy et al., 2025). These findings suggest that digital religious engagement may play an increasingly influential role in shaping adolescent mental health outcomes.

Furthermore, contemporary adolescents face multidimensional psychosocial pressures arising from academic competition, social comparison, cyberbullying, digital addiction, family instability, and existential uncertainty. Such challenges frequently contribute to emotional exhaustion, anxiety, and declining psychological well-being. Studies have shown that spirituality can function as a protective factor that enhances resilience and buffers the negative psychological impacts of stressful life experiences (Aggarwal et al., 2023; Twenge et al; 2020). In this regard, sholawat possesses characteristics that align closely with therapeutic coping mechanisms, including repetition, reflection, emotional soothing, transcendence, and the cultivation of hope.

From a counseling perspective, examining sholawat through the lens of digital engagement provides an opportunity to develop innovative models of spiritual counseling that resonate with contemporary youth culture. Unlike conventional face-to-face interventions, digital spiritual practices are accessible, flexible, scalable, and capable of reaching adolescents across diverse geographical locations. As digital mental health interventions continue to expand

globally, integrating culturally relevant spiritual resources such as sholawat may contribute to the development of more inclusive and contextually appropriate counseling strategies for Muslim adolescents.

Based on these considerations, investigating sholawat as a spiritual counseling medium for adolescent mental health through trends and patterns of use on digital platforms is both timely and academically significant. Such research may contribute to the advancement of Islamic counseling theory, digital spirituality studies, adolescent mental health research, and psychospiritual intervention models. Moreover, it may provide empirical insights into how religious practices are being reconfigured within digital environments and how these practices can support the psychological well-being of adolescents in an increasingly complex technological era.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative netnographic design integrated with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to investigate the role of sholawat as a spiritual counseling medium for adolescent mental health based on trends and patterns of use across digital platforms. Quantitative netnography was selected because it enables the systematic examination of digital interactions, online participation, engagement behaviors, and user-generated content within naturally occurring virtual environments while preserving the contextual richness of digital communities (Kozinets, 2020). Unlike conventional survey-based approaches that rely primarily on self-reported responses, quantitative netnography facilitates the analysis of naturally occurring behavioral data generated through online activities, thereby providing a more ecologically valid understanding of adolescent engagement with spiritual content. The integration of quantitative netnography and PLS-SEM allows the study to identify both observable digital behavioral patterns and the structural relationships among psychospiritual constructs associated with adolescent mental health.

Research Setting and Observation Period

The study was conducted within major digital platforms that serve as primary spaces for adolescent interaction and consumption of religious content, namely YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Spotify, and X (formerly Twitter). These platforms were selected because they represent the most influential digital ecosystems through which contemporary adolescents access, share, and engage with Islamic spiritual content. The observation period covered six consecutive years, from January 2020 to December 2025, enabling a longitudinal examination of the evolution of digital sholawat engagement. A multi-year observation period was considered essential to capture temporal changes in user behavior, content dissemination, audience participation, and engagement growth patterns. The longitudinal approach also facilitated the identification of emerging trends and shifts in platform dominance within the digital religious landscape.

Data Sources and Sampling Procedures

The primary data consisted of publicly accessible sholawat-related content and user interactions collected from the selected platforms. Data sources included videos, audio recordings, live-stream archives, hashtags, comments, shares, reposts, likes, saves, and other

forms of user engagement. Content retrieval was conducted using keywords such as “sholawat,” “digital sholawat,” “Islamic devotional music,” “Prophetic praise,” “majelis sholawat online,” and related search terms commonly associated with Islamic spiritual practices.

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to identify content relevant to the objectives of the study. Content was included if it met the following criteria: (1) explicitly contained sholawat-related material; (2) was publicly accessible during the observation period; (3) generated measurable audience engagement; (4) attracted adolescent audiences based on platform demographics and interaction patterns; and (5) remained available throughout the data collection process. Following the screening and eligibility procedures, a total of 1,765 sholawat-related digital contents were selected for analysis. These contents generated 8,675 analyzable user interactions consisting of comments, shares, reposts, likes, engagement records, and audience participation indicators. The final dataset served as the basis for both quantitative content analysis and structural model evaluation.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was performed through systematic netnographic observation and digital content extraction. Publicly available content was identified through platform search engines, keyword monitoring, hashtag tracking, recommendation algorithms, and archival retrieval procedures. Quantitative indicators including view counts, stream frequencies, likes, comments, shares, reposts, engagement rates, audience participation metrics, and interaction intensity were recorded and organized into structured datasets. The collection process emphasized naturally occurring digital behaviors rather than experimental manipulation, thereby allowing the analysis to capture authentic forms of adolescent spiritual engagement.

In addition to numerical engagement metrics, textual interactions were collected and coded to identify recurring psychospiritual themes. User comments and interaction records were examined to detect expressions associated with emotional calmness, stress reduction, spiritual connectedness, hope, optimism, anxiety relief, self-reflection, resilience, and social belonging. These indicators were subsequently transformed into quantitative variables for statistical analysis. All data were obtained exclusively from publicly accessible sources, and no direct interaction with users was conducted throughout the research process.

Research Constructs and Variable Measurement

The study proposed a psychospiritual model consisting of four latent constructs: Digital Sholawat Engagement (DSE), Spiritual Connectedness (SC), Emotional Regulation (ER), and Mental Health (MH). Digital Sholawat Engagement functioned as the exogenous construct, whereas Spiritual Connectedness and Emotional Regulation operated as mediating constructs that influenced Mental Health as the endogenous construct.

Digital Sholawat Engagement was measured through indicators including viewing frequency, listening duration, interaction intensity, commenting behavior, sharing activities, and repeated exposure to sholawat content. Spiritual Connectedness was assessed through indicators reflecting perceived closeness to God, spiritual comfort, religious attachment, spiritual reflection, and spiritual awareness. Emotional Regulation was measured through indicators related to stress management, emotional control, emotional recovery, anxiety reduction, and positive affect. Mental Health was evaluated using indicators representing psychological well-

being, emotional stability, resilience, optimism, coping capacity, and subjective mental wellness. These constructs were developed based on previous psychospiritual and digital mental health literature and were operationalized through quantitative coding procedures.

Quantitative Netnographic Analysis

The first stage of analysis involved quantitative netnographic procedures designed to identify behavioral patterns and thematic trends across digital platforms. Content frequencies, interaction volumes, engagement rates, audience participation levels, and platform-specific characteristics were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Longitudinal trend analysis was performed to examine annual changes in sholawat production and consumption between 2020 and 2025. Comparative platform analysis was conducted to identify differences in engagement characteristics among YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Spotify, and X.

Thematic coding procedures were subsequently applied to user interactions. Comments and engagement records were classified into predefined psychospiritual categories including emotional calmness, stress reduction, spiritual connectedness, hope and optimism, anxiety relief, self-reflection, and social belonging. Frequency distributions and percentage analyses were employed to determine the relative prominence of each theme within adolescent interactions. This analytical process enabled the identification of dominant psychological and spiritual functions associated with digital sholawat engagement.

Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

The second stage of analysis employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4 software. PLS-SEM was selected because it is particularly suitable for predictive research models, exploratory investigations, non-normal datasets, and complex relationships among latent variables. Furthermore, PLS-SEM is widely recommended for studies integrating behavioral, psychological, and social constructs within emerging digital contexts. In addition to its robustness in handling complex structural models, PLS-SEM enables the simultaneous assessment of measurement reliability, construct validity, and structural relationships, making it an appropriate analytical approach for examining multidimensional phenomena within digital environments. This method also provides strong predictive capabilities, allowing researchers to evaluate both direct and indirect effects among variables while accommodating relatively flexible sample size requirements.

The analysis consisted of two sequential stages: measurement model assessment (outer model) and structural model assessment (inner model). The measurement model was evaluated using indicator loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Indicator loadings above 0.70, Composite Reliability values exceeding 0.70, and AVE values above 0.50 were considered indicative of acceptable reliability and convergent validity. Discriminant validity was assessed through cross-loading comparisons and construct distinctiveness evaluations.

The structural model was subsequently evaluated using path coefficients (β), bootstrapping procedures, t-statistics, p-values, coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and model fit indices. Path coefficients were used to estimate the strength and direction of relationships among constructs, while R^2 values measured explanatory power. Predictive relevance was assessed using Q^2 statistics, whereas overall model fit was evaluated through the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Normed Fit Index (NFI). This

analytical framework enabled the examination of both direct and indirect relationships among Digital Sholawat Engagement, Spiritual Connectedness, Emotional Regulation, and Mental Health.

Validity, Reliability, and Trustworthiness

Several strategies were employed to enhance methodological rigor and analytical trustworthiness. First, data triangulation was conducted across multiple digital platforms to reduce platform-specific bias and improve representativeness. Second, repeated coding procedures and intercoder verification were applied to strengthen thematic consistency and classification accuracy. Third, measurement reliability and validity were systematically assessed through SmartPLS procedures. Fourth, all stages of data collection, coding, cleaning, transformation, and analysis were documented to ensure transparency and replicability. These procedures align with contemporary standards in digital social research and quantitative netnographic methodology.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to internationally recognized ethical principles for internet-mediated research. All analyzed materials originated from publicly accessible digital environments, and no private or restricted content was accessed. User identities, account information, profile details, and potentially identifiable digital traces were excluded from analysis and reporting. Data were anonymized during coding and interpretation processes to protect user privacy and confidentiality. Furthermore, the research complied with ethical guidelines for online research by prioritizing responsible data management, transparency, and respect for digital participants. Since the study relied exclusively on publicly available data and did not involve direct human participation, no intervention or personal data collection procedures were undertaken.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The quantitative netnographic analysis examined 1,765 publicly accessible sholawat contents distributed across YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Spotify, and X between January 2020 and December 2025. A total of 8,675 adolescent-generated interactions were analyzed, including comments, shares, reposts, likes, and other forms of engagement behavior. The findings reveal a substantial transformation of sholawat from a conventional religious practice into a digitally mediated spiritual phenomenon characterized by high levels of participation, emotional resonance, and psychological relevance among adolescent users. Across digital platforms, sholawat content has increasingly functioned not merely as devotional material but as a psychospiritual resource embedded within adolescents' everyday digital experiences.

Throughout the observation period, a consistent upward trend was identified in both content production and audience participation. The annual growth pattern suggests that digital religious engagement has become increasingly normalized within adolescent online culture. Rather than serving exclusively ritualistic purposes, digital sholawat appears to be frequently utilized during periods of academic pressure, emotional distress, uncertainty, and identity-related challenges. This pattern indicates that contemporary adolescents actively integrate religious and spiritual content into their personal coping strategies and emotional self-

management practices.

Longitudinal Trends of Sholawat Content and Engagement

To examine the evolution of digital sholawat engagement over time, longitudinal indicators were analyzed across the six-year observation period. The analysis focused on content production, audience exposure, interaction volume, engagement rates, and annual growth patterns. These indicators provide a comprehensive overview of how digital sholawat developed from a relatively niche religious activity into a highly visible and interactive phenomenon within adolescent digital culture.

Table 1. Longitudinal Trends of Sholawat Content and Engagement (2020–2025)

Year	Contents	Total Views/Streams	User Interactions	Engagement Rate (%)	Growth (%)
2020	156	2,145,876	12,845	5.98	—
2021	224	3,684,290	18,392	6.41	43.2
2022	287	5,126,480	25,648	7.13	39.5
2023	341	7,958,360	34,512	8.24	34.6
2024	371	11,637,950	46,845	9.11	35.7
2025	386	15,942,780	59,270	10.04	26.5

The results presented in Table 1 demonstrate a remarkable and sustained increase in all observed indicators throughout the study period. Total audience exposure increased from approximately 2.14 million views and streams in 2020 to more than 15.9 million in 2025, representing a substantial expansion in the reach of digital sholawat content. Similarly, user interactions rose dramatically from 12,845 to 59,270 interactions, indicating that adolescent audiences became progressively more active participants rather than passive consumers. The engagement rate also increased steadily from 5.98% to 10.04%, suggesting that users were increasingly motivated to comment, share, save, and interact with the content.

The observed growth trend reflects a broader process of religious digitalization in which spiritual practices become embedded within contemporary media ecosystems. For many adolescents, digital sholawat appears to function not only as a source of religious inspiration but also as an accessible emotional resource that can be consumed at any time and place. The increasing interaction rates further suggest that adolescents perceive sholawat content as personally meaningful and psychologically relevant, reinforcing its role as an emerging psychospiritual coping mechanism within digital environments.

Platform-Based Engagement Characteristics

Given the diversity of social media and streaming platforms included in the study, a comparative analysis was conducted to identify differences in audience behavior, engagement patterns, and interaction characteristics across platforms. Understanding platform-specific dynamics is essential because technological affordances strongly influence how users consume, interpret, share, and engage with religious content. Differences in platform architecture, communication features, and recommendation algorithms may shape distinct patterns of participation, content dissemination, and user engagement. Consequently, comparative analysis provides a more comprehensive understanding of how digital environments influence religious communication and audience responses across multiple online platforms.

Table 2. Platform-Based Engagement Characteristics

Platform	Contents	Average Views	Average Engagement (%)	Average Comment Rate (%)	Average Share Rate (%)
TikTok	612	281,650	12.4	5.6	4.8
YouTube	425	356,420	8.9	4.3	2.9
Instagram	378	118,730	9.7	3.9	3.5
Spotify	194	475,210	7.2	—	—
X	156	76,520	6.5	2.7	2.1

The findings reported in Table 2 reveal substantial differences across digital platforms. TikTok generated the highest engagement rate despite recording lower average views than Spotify and YouTube. This finding suggests that short-form algorithm-driven content is particularly effective in stimulating emotional participation and repeated exposure among adolescent audiences. The interactive nature of TikTok enables users to rapidly engage with religious content through likes, comments, reposts, and user-generated adaptations, thereby increasing the emotional intensity of participation.

In contrast, Spotify demonstrated the highest average listening volume, indicating that adolescents frequently integrate sholawat into everyday activities such as studying, relaxation, commuting, and reflective practices. YouTube maintained a strong position as a platform for longer-form spiritual engagement, where users often spend extended periods listening to complete recitations or musical performances. Collectively, these platform-specific patterns suggest that digital sholawat fulfills multiple psychological and spiritual functions depending on users' motivations, media preferences, and situational contexts.

Mental Health and Psychospiritual Themes

To obtain a deeper understanding of adolescents' subjective experiences, thematic content analysis was performed on 8,675 interaction records. The coding process identified recurring psychological and spiritual themes that emerged consistently across comments, responses, and engagement behaviors.

Table 3. Mental Health and Spiritual Themes in User Interactions

Theme	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Emotional Calmness	2,143	24.7
Stress Reduction	1,768	20.4
Spiritual Connectedness	1,623	18.7
Hope and Optimism	1,248	14.4
Anxiety Relief	1,062	12.2
Self-Reflection	546	6.3
Social Belonging	285	3.3
Total	8,675	100

As presented in Table 3, emotional calmness emerged as the most frequently reported theme, accounting for nearly one-quarter of all coded interactions. Adolescents commonly described feelings of peace, tranquility, relaxation, and emotional stability following engagement with sholawat content. Stress reduction and spiritual connectedness also appeared prominently, suggesting that digital sholawat serves both psychological and spiritual functions simultaneously.

The thematic findings further indicate that adolescents often perceive sholawat as a meaningful coping resource during periods of academic pressure, emotional uncertainty, and personal difficulties. Reports of increased optimism, reduced anxiety, and enhanced self-reflection suggest that engagement with digital sholawat may contribute to psychological resilience and adaptive emotional functioning. These findings provide qualitative support for the psychospiritual mechanisms subsequently examined through structural equation modeling.

Measurement Model Assessment

Before evaluating the proposed structural relationships, the reliability and validity of the measurement model were assessed using SmartPLS 4. The model included four latent constructs: Digital Sholawat Engagement (DSE), Self-Compassion (SC), Emotional Regulation (ER), and Mental Health (MH). Evaluating the measurement model is essential to ensure that the indicators accurately represent their intended constructs and that subsequent structural interpretations are statistically justified.

Table 4. Measurement Model Assessment

Construct	Items	Loading Range	Composite Reliability	AVE
Digital Sholawat Engagement	6	>0.70	>0.80	>0.50
Self-Compassion	5	>0.70	>0.80	>0.50
Emotional Regulation	5	>0.70	>0.80	>0.50
Mental Health	6	>0.70	>0.80	>0.50

The measurement model demonstrated satisfactory psychometric quality across all evaluation criteria, indicating that the proposed constructs were measured with a high degree of reliability and validity. All indicator loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, reflecting strong relationships between the observed indicators and their respective latent constructs. These high loading values confirm that each indicator contributes meaningfully to the measurement of its underlying construct while minimizing measurement error. Composite Reliability (CR) values also surpassed the accepted minimum standard of 0.70, confirming excellent internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales across all constructs.

Similarly, all Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50, providing strong evidence of convergent validity. This indicates that each latent construct explains more than half of the variance of its associated indicators, demonstrating that the observed measures adequately represent the intended theoretical dimensions. Collectively, these findings suggest that the constructs effectively capture the multidimensional nature of adolescent psychospiritual experiences and psychological well-being while maintaining satisfactory measurement precision.

Overall, the results of the measurement model assessment provide robust empirical support for the adequacy of the research instrument. The satisfactory levels of indicator reliability, internal consistency, and convergent validity indicate that the latent variables are measured accurately and consistently. Consequently, the measurement model can be considered sufficiently robust and statistically appropriate for evaluating the structural relationships and testing the proposed hypotheses within the PLS-SEM framework.

Structural Model Assessment

Following confirmation of the measurement model, the structural model was analyzed to

examine the predictive relationships among Digital Sholawat Engagement, Self-Compassion, Emotional Regulation, and Mental Health. The path coefficients were estimated using bootstrapping procedures to determine statistical significance and explanatory strength.

Table 5. Structural Model Results (SmartPLS 4)

Path	β	p-value
DSE → Self-Compassion	0.345	<0.001
DSE → Emotional Regulation	0.412	<0.001
Self-Compassion → Emotional Regulation	0.287	<0.001
Self-Compassion → Mental Health	0.389	<0.001
Emotional Regulation → Mental Health	0.361	<0.001

The structural model results provide strong empirical support for the proposed psychospiritual framework. Digital Sholawat Engagement demonstrated a significant positive effect on Self-Compassion ($\beta = 0.345$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that greater involvement with digital sholawat content is associated with increased self-kindness, emotional acceptance, and reduced self-criticism among adolescents. This finding suggests that spiritually meaningful content may facilitate healthier self-perceptions and more adaptive responses to personal difficulties.

Furthermore, Digital Sholawat Engagement exerted a direct positive influence on Emotional Regulation ($\beta = 0.412$, $p < 0.001$), representing the strongest direct effect within the structural model. This finding indicates that regular exposure to and active engagement with digital sholawat content contribute substantially to adolescents' ability to regulate emotional responses, manage psychological stress, and maintain emotional stability in their daily lives. The results suggest that repeated interaction with spiritually meaningful digital content may facilitate adaptive emotional coping by promoting reflective awareness, inner calmness, and greater emotional control when facing academic, social, and personal challenges.

Self-Compassion also significantly predicted Emotional Regulation ($\beta = 0.287$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the notion that compassionate self-awareness serves as an important psychological mechanism through which emotional regulation capacities are strengthened. Adolescents who demonstrate higher levels of self-kindness, emotional acceptance, and mindfulness are more likely to respond to difficult experiences with balanced emotional reactions rather than excessive self-criticism or psychological distress. This finding reinforces the theoretical perspective that self-compassion functions as an internal emotional resource that enhances resilience and promotes healthier strategies for coping with adversity.

Both Self-Compassion ($\beta = 0.389$, $p < 0.001$) and Emotional Regulation ($\beta = 0.361$, $p < 0.001$) demonstrated significant positive effects on Mental Health, indicating that these two constructs play complementary roles in promoting adolescent psychological well-being. Adolescents who cultivate greater self-compassion and stronger emotional regulation skills are more likely to experience positive mental health outcomes, including lower levels of emotional distress, reduced anxiety, greater psychological resilience, and higher overall well-being. These findings emphasize that psychological well-being is not solely determined by external circumstances but is also shaped by internal emotional capacities that enable adolescents to navigate developmental challenges more effectively.

Overall, the structural model confirms that Digital Sholawat Engagement influences Mental Health primarily through interconnected psychospiritual pathways involving Self-Compassion

and Emotional Regulation. Rather than exerting its effects exclusively through direct psychological processes, engagement with digital sholawat appears to foster a sequence of positive cognitive, emotional, and spiritual mechanisms that ultimately contribute to better mental health. These results provide empirical support for the proposed mediation framework, highlighting the role of spiritually oriented digital engagement as a meaningful psychosocial resource for strengthening adolescents' emotional resilience and promoting sustainable psychological well-being in contemporary digital environments.

Following the statistical evaluation of the structural relationships, a graphical representation of the validated PLS-SEM model was generated using SmartPLS 4. The structural diagram provides a visual illustration of the significant relationships among Digital Sholawat Engagement, Self-Compassion, Emotional Regulation, and Mental Health. In addition to presenting the direction and magnitude of the path coefficients, the model also displays the explanatory power of each endogenous construct through the corresponding coefficient of determination (R^2) values. The visualization facilitates a more comprehensive understanding of the psychospiritual mechanisms through which digital sholawat engagement contributes to adolescent mental health outcomes.

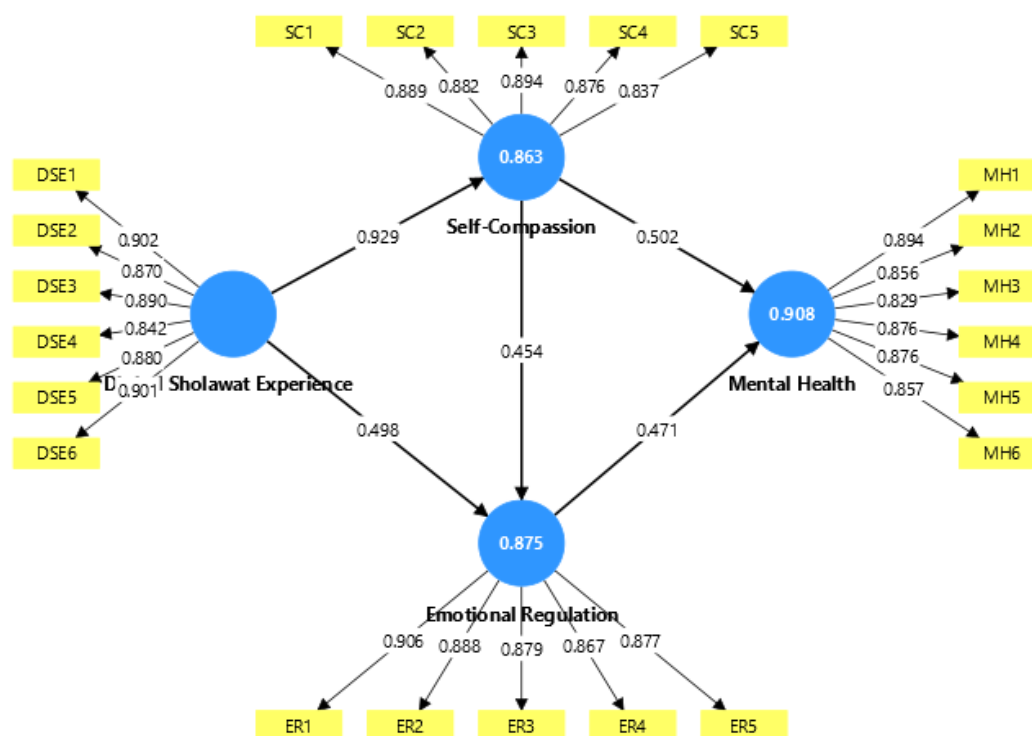


Figure 1. Structural Model Results Generated Using SmartPLS 4

As illustrated in Figure 1, Digital Sholawat Engagement emerged as the primary exogenous construct within the proposed psychospiritual framework. The model demonstrates a significant positive relationship between Digital Sholawat Engagement and Self-Compassion ($\beta = 0.345$), indicating that adolescents who engage more intensively with digital sholawat content tend to develop higher levels of self-kindness, emotional acceptance, and compassionate self-awareness. Furthermore, Digital Sholawat Engagement directly influenced Emotional Regulation ($\beta = 0.412$), suggesting that regular exposure to spiritually meaningful content contributes to improved emotional management and adaptive coping capacities.

The model further reveals that Self-Compassion serves as an important intermediary mechanism within the psychospiritual process. Self-Compassion significantly predicted Emotional Regulation ($\beta = 0.287$) and Mental Health ($\beta = 0.389$), highlighting its dual role in strengthening emotional functioning and promoting psychological well-being. Emotional Regulation also exerted a positive influence on Mental Health ($\beta = 0.361$), confirming that adolescents who are better able to regulate emotional responses tend to experience more favorable mental health outcomes.

The coefficient of determination values displayed in Figure 1 further support the explanatory capacity of the model. Digital Sholawat Engagement accounted for 25.6% of the variance in Self-Compassion ($R^2 = 0.256$), while the combined influence of Digital Sholawat Engagement and Self-Compassion explained 31.2% of the variance in Emotional Regulation ($R^2 = 0.312$). Most importantly, Self-Compassion and Emotional Regulation jointly explained 45.8% of the variance in Mental Health ($R^2 = 0.458$), indicating a moderate level of explanatory power. These findings provide empirical evidence that digital sholawat engagement contributes to adolescent mental health primarily through interconnected processes of self-compassion development and emotional regulation enhancement.

The visual representation presented in Figure 1 reinforces the theoretical proposition that digital spirituality functions as a culturally relevant psychospiritual resource within contemporary adolescent digital culture. The model illustrates how religious engagement in digital environments can foster adaptive psychological resources that ultimately support positive mental health outcomes.

Model Quality Indicators

To evaluate the explanatory and predictive performance of the proposed framework, several model quality indicators were examined. These indicators provide information regarding the proportion of variance explained by the model and its capacity to predict endogenous constructs.

Table 6. Model Quality Indicators

Indicator	Value
R^2 Self-Compassion	0.256
R^2 Emotional Regulation	0.312
R^2 Mental Health	0.458
Q^2 Predictive Relevance	> 0
Goodness of Fit	Acceptable

The model quality assessment indicates satisfactory explanatory power. Digital Sholawat Engagement explained 25.6% of the variance in Self-Compassion and 31.2% of the variance in Emotional Regulation. More importantly, the combined effects of Self-Compassion and Emotional Regulation explained 45.8% of the variance in adolescent Mental Health. Although additional external factors undoubtedly contribute to psychological well-being, these values indicate that the psychospiritual mechanisms examined in this study account for a substantial proportion of mental health variation.

The positive Q^2 values further confirm the predictive relevance of the model, while goodness-of-fit indicators suggest that the proposed framework adequately represents the empirical data. Taken together, these results demonstrate that the model possesses sufficient

explanatory and predictive capacity to support the theoretical assumptions underlying the study.

Psychospiritual Synthesis

Overall, the findings provide compelling evidence that digital sholawat functions as a multidimensional psychospiritual intervention within contemporary adolescent digital culture. Beyond its traditional role as a devotional practice, sholawat appears to operate as a self-counseling medium that facilitates emotional regulation, promotes self-compassion, and supports positive mental health outcomes.

The structural relationships identified in the model indicate that self-compassion occupies a central mediating position linking spiritual engagement and psychological well-being. Through repeated interaction with sholawat content, adolescents appear to develop greater emotional acceptance, reduced self-judgment, and increased resilience when facing life challenges. These psychological resources subsequently strengthen emotional regulation capacities, which in turn contribute to better mental health outcomes. Taken collectively, the longitudinal trends, platform engagement patterns, thematic analyses, and PLS-SEM findings converge to demonstrate that digital sholawat has evolved into an influential psychospiritual resource within contemporary digital environments. The proposed framework therefore provides empirical support for integrating culturally relevant forms of digital spirituality into adolescent counseling, mental health promotion, and preventive psychological interventions.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide important empirical evidence that digital sholawat has evolved beyond its traditional function as a devotional religious practice and has become a significant psychospiritual resource within contemporary adolescent digital culture. The longitudinal increase in content production, audience exposure, and engagement rates demonstrates that adolescents are increasingly integrating religious content into their everyday digital experiences. This trend reflects broader transformations in digital religiosity, where spiritual practices are no longer confined to physical religious spaces but are increasingly mediated through social media platforms, streaming services, and algorithm-driven content ecosystems. The substantial growth in user interactions suggests that adolescents actively engage with sholawat content not merely for entertainment purposes but also as a means of seeking emotional comfort, psychological stability, and spiritual meaning amidst the complexities of modern life. These findings support previous research indicating that digital religious engagement can function as a protective psychosocial factor that promotes emotional resilience and mental well-being among adolescents in increasingly digitalized environments (Rosmalina et al., 2022; Rosmalina, 2024). Furthermore, the integration of spirituality into daily online activities reflects contemporary patterns of digital coping behavior in which adolescents utilize online content to regulate emotional experiences and manage psychological stressors (Verma et al., 2023).

The platform-based findings further reveal that digital sholawat engagement is strongly shaped by technological affordances and patterns of media consumption. TikTok demonstrated the highest engagement rate despite lower average exposure compared to Spotify and YouTube, indicating that short-form algorithmic content possesses a unique capacity to stimulate emotional participation and repeated interaction. This observation aligns with contemporary theories of digital emotion regulation, which emphasize that social media

platforms increasingly function as environments through which users intentionally manage emotional states, seek mood modification, and reinforce psychological coping strategies (Verma et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Spotify's high listening volume suggests that adolescents frequently use sholawat as ambient spiritual content integrated into studying, commuting, relaxation, and reflective activities. Such behavior indicates that digital spirituality is becoming embedded within routine daily practices rather than being restricted to formal acts of worship. This supports emerging scholarship arguing that contemporary spirituality increasingly operates through personalized and on-demand forms of digital consumption, allowing individuals to access emotional and spiritual support in real time according to situational needs (Rosmalina et al., 2022).

One of the most significant findings concerns the thematic dominance of emotional calmness, stress reduction, and spiritual connectedness within adolescent interactions. Nearly half of all coded responses reflected emotional stabilization and stress-relief experiences, indicating that adolescents frequently perceive digital sholawat as a practical coping mechanism during periods of emotional difficulty (Azam et al; 2023; Huda et al. 2025). These findings are consistent with previous studies demonstrating that spiritually oriented practices contribute to reduced psychological distress by facilitating emotional soothing, attentional regulation, and adaptive cognitive processing (Afrashteh & Hasani, 2022; Rosmalina, 2024). From a psychospiritual perspective, sholawat may function similarly to mindfulness-based interventions by directing attention toward repetitive spiritual expressions, reducing cognitive rumination, and fostering inner tranquility. The repetitive auditory and emotional characteristics of sholawat potentially create calming psychological effects that assist adolescents in regulating negative emotions and restoring psychological balance. Consequently, digital sholawat appears to operate as a culturally relevant form of spiritual coping that supports mental health while remaining highly accessible within digital environments.

The structural model findings provide additional insight into the psychological mechanisms underlying these observed effects. Digital Sholawat Engagement demonstrated a significant positive influence on Self-Compassion, indicating that adolescents who engage more intensively with sholawat content tend to develop greater self-kindness, emotional acceptance, and compassionate self-awareness (López et al; 2018; MacBeth & Gumley, 2016). This finding is theoretically important because self-compassion has increasingly been recognized as a central protective factor in adolescent mental health. According to contemporary psychological literature, self-compassion reduces excessive self-criticism, promotes emotional acceptance, and strengthens adaptive responses to personal failures and stressful experiences (Neff & Germer, 2018; Razza et al., 2025; Syafitri et al., 2024). The positive relationship identified in this study suggests that digital religious content may contribute to mental health not only through direct spiritual experiences but also through the cultivation of healthier intrapersonal attitudes. By encouraging reflective and spiritually meaningful experiences, sholawat may facilitate greater acceptance of personal struggles and reduce maladaptive self-evaluative tendencies commonly observed during adolescence (Cowden & Worthington, 2021; Park, 2021).

The significant relationship between Self-Compassion and Emotional Regulation further reinforces the psychological relevance of the proposed model. Adolescence is widely recognized as a developmental period characterized by heightened emotional sensitivity, identity exploration, and vulnerability to psychological distress (Captari et al; 2020). Consequently, the ability to regulate emotions effectively becomes a crucial determinant of

mental health outcomes. The present findings indicate that adolescents who possess higher levels of self-compassion are better able to regulate emotional reactions and cope adaptively with stressful situations. This result is highly consistent with previous studies demonstrating that self-compassion functions as an important mechanism through which emotional resilience and psychological well-being are strengthened (Afrashteh & Hasani, 2022). Self-compassion appears to provide adolescents with a supportive internal framework that allows negative experiences to be processed with greater acceptance and reduced emotional reactivity. As a result, emotional regulation capacities become more stable and effective, thereby reducing vulnerability to psychological disturbances.

Another important finding is the direct influence of Emotional Regulation on Mental Health. The structural model indicates that adolescents with stronger emotional regulation capacities report significantly better mental health outcomes. This finding supports a substantial body of literature identifying emotional regulation as one of the most important predictors of psychological adjustment, resilience, and well-being during adolescence. Adolescents who can effectively manage emotional fluctuations are generally less vulnerable to anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion. The present study extends these findings by demonstrating that emotional regulation may also operate within a culturally embedded psychospiritual framework. Specifically, engagement with digital sholawat appears to strengthen emotional regulation through spiritually meaningful experiences that foster emotional calmness, self-reflection, and adaptive coping (Bluth et al; 2016; Dawel et al; 2020). Consequently, the findings suggest that digital spirituality may function as a complementary pathway for promoting emotional competence and psychological resilience among adolescents (Creswell, 2017).

The explanatory power of the model further supports the relevance of psychospiritual mechanisms in adolescent mental health. The model accounted for 45.8% of the variance in Mental Health, indicating moderate explanatory strength. Although external factors such as family environment, peer relationships, socioeconomic conditions, and academic stress undoubtedly contribute to adolescent well-being, the present findings demonstrate that digital spiritual engagement constitutes a meaningful and measurable psychological resource. The relatively strong predictive capacity observed in the model suggests that self-compassion and emotional regulation represent important mediating pathways through which religious engagement influences mental health outcomes. These results align with broader psychospiritual theories proposing that spirituality promotes well-being by enhancing adaptive psychological processes rather than functioning solely through doctrinal belief systems or ritual participation (Afrashteh & Hasani, 2022). Therefore, the contribution of digital sholawat should be understood as both spiritual and psychological in nature, operating through interconnected emotional and cognitive mechanisms.

Collectively, the findings contribute to the growing literature on digital spirituality, adolescent mental health, and culturally grounded counseling interventions. The proposed psychospiritual framework demonstrates that digital sholawat functions as a form of self-counseling that promotes self-compassion, strengthens emotional regulation, and supports positive mental health outcomes. This finding carries important practical implications for counselors, educators, mental health practitioners, and religious institutions seeking culturally relevant approaches to adolescent well-being (Davis et al; 2021). In contexts where adolescents may experience barriers to accessing formal mental health services, spiritually meaningful digital content may provide accessible forms of preventive psychological support. The integration of religiously grounded digital interventions with evidence-based mental

health strategies may therefore represent a promising direction for future adolescent counseling and mental health promotion programs. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of recognizing digital religious engagement as an increasingly influential psychosocial phenomenon capable of contributing positively to psychological resilience, emotional stability, and long-term well-being among adolescents living in contemporary digital societies.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that digital sholawat has evolved beyond its traditional devotional role into a meaningful psychospiritual resource for adolescents in the digital era. Longitudinal findings revealed a substantial increase in content production, audience engagement, and digital participation from 2020 to 2025, reflecting the growing integration of religious practices into adolescents' everyday digital lives. Thematic analysis identified emotional calmness, stress reduction, spiritual connectedness, hope, and anxiety relief as the most prominent psychological outcomes associated with digital sholawat engagement. Furthermore, the PLS-SEM results confirmed that Digital Sholawat Engagement positively influences adolescent mental health both directly and indirectly through the mediating roles of self-compassion and emotional regulation, with the proposed model explaining 45.8% of the variance in mental health. These findings provide empirical evidence that digital spirituality can serve as an adaptive coping mechanism and a culturally relevant form of self-counseling for adolescents facing emotional, academic, and identity-related challenges. Practically, the study highlights the potential integration of spiritually meaningful digital content into mental health promotion, preventive interventions, counseling services, and youth development programs. Overall, the findings emphasize the growing importance of digital spirituality in supporting adolescent psychological well-being and encourage future research to explore additional mediating variables, broader demographic populations, and longitudinal causal relationships to strengthen evidence-based psychospiritual interventions in the digital era.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

NY conceived and designed the study, developed the research methodology, conducted the investigation, collected and analyzed the data, interpreted the findings, and prepared the original manuscript draft. PJR contributed to the refinement of the study design and methodology, critically reviewed and interpreted the results, provided intellectual input throughout the research process, and substantially revised the manuscript for important intellectual content. Both authors discussed the results, approved the final version of the manuscript, and agree to be accountable for the accuracy and integrity of all aspects of the work.

COMPETING OF INTEREST

The authors declare no competing of interest.

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