

Influence of *Intensity of Social Media Against Devotion Pattern, Daily Bible, and Mental Health of Fourth Semester Students of IAKN Kupang*

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the impact of social media usage on daily Bible devotion habits and the mental health of fourth-semester students in the Christian Religious Education Study Program at IAKN Kupang. In this digital age, there has been a significant increase in social media usage among Christian students, which may affect their spiritual discipline and mental health. The methodology used in this study is a quantitative approach with a causal explanatory survey design. A total of 45 students became the research sample, taken using a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected through a questionnaire using a Likert scale and analyzed with SPSS software version 26, including descriptive analysis, classical assumption tests, multiple regression, and path analysis. The research findings indicate that the intensity of social media usage has a significant negative impact on daily Bible devotion patterns and mental well-being ($\beta = -0.347$; $p = 0.002$). Daily Bible devotion patterns function as a partial mediator with an indirect effect of -0.189 ($p < 0.05$). Devotion has a significant positive influence on mental health ($\beta = 0.516$; $p = 0.000$). The regression model successfully explained 58.2% of the variation in mental health ($R^2 = 0.582$). This study concluded that daily Bible devotion serves as a protective factor that can reduce the negative impact of social media.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The digital era has drastically changed human lifestyles, including among students. Social media is no longer just a communication tool, but has become an inseparable part and even dominates daily life. According to Haq et al. (2025), Indonesia had around 180 million active social media users by the end of 2025, equivalent to 62.9% of the total population. This is reinforced by Adiarsi, Putra, & Raymond (2024), who emphasized that the average internet user in Indonesia spends a significant amount of time on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and YouTube. This phenomenon is increasingly prominent among Generation Z and millennials, the majority of whom are students. Sapriadi (2024) explained that high intensity of social media use has a dual impact. On the one hand, it provides benefits in the form of fast access to information, social connections, and opportunities for self-development. On the other hand, it poses serious risks such as impaired concentration, addiction,

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), excessive social comparison, and decreased quality of rest and self-reflection. Fourth-semester students at IAKN Kupang, as future educators and church ministers, are in a crucial transition phase where the balance between the digital world and spiritual life is crucial. According to previous research, uncontrolled social media use has the potential to erode time that should be used for productive and reflective activities.

For Christian students, the influence of social media not only touches social and academic aspects, but also greatly affects their spiritual lives, especially their daily Bible devotion patterns. Marsaulina, Sos, & PAK (2025) stated that Bible devotion is a core spiritual practice that is a source of strength, wisdom, serenity, and character transformation (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:105). However, the flood of digital content that is fast and often contradicts biblical values makes it difficult for many students to maintain spiritual discipline. Utomo (2025) stated that time that should be used for reading, reflecting, and praying is often replaced by endless scrolling and consuming temporary content. As a result, there is a decline in the quality and consistency of personal devotion that weakens the foundation of faith amidst the strong current of secularism. At IAKN Kupang Semester IV, students face double pressure between academic demands and the temptations of the digital world. Padan (2025), many Christian students are more familiar with God's Word through short quotes on social media than through systematic and in-depth reading. This leads to the emergence of a shallow and less rooted spirituality. This research is important to uncover these dynamics specifically in the context of Christian students in Eastern Indonesia, where local cultural values remain strong but are increasingly being eroded by global digital influences. Halawa (2025) states that excessive use of social media tends to reduce the depth of spiritual experience because algorithms encourage provocative content rather than content that matures faith.

The mental health of Christian students in the digital age is a serious concern. Edy, Hasanuddin, Nurmalitasari, & Harsono (2025) stated that academic pressure, career demands, financial problems, and the influence of secular culture have led to an increase in cases of anxiety, depression, stress, and burnout among Indonesian students. Various surveys show alarming figures where more than half of students experience symptoms of depression and anxiety. Gafar & Firmawati (n.d.) revealed that excessive use of social media is consistently positively correlated with symptoms of mental health disorders, such as low self-esteem, body image disturbances, and an increased risk of negative thoughts. For Christian students, mental health is inseparable from the spiritual dimension. Sukadana (2025) explained that the consistent practice of daily Bible devotion serves as a strong protective factor for mental health by increasing resilience and a sense of peace (Philippians 4:6-7). With this understanding, it is hoped that appropriate strategies will emerge to maintain a balance between digital life and students' holistic health.

Although many studies have been conducted, studies that specifically examine the relationship between social media intensity, daily Bible devotion patterns, and mental health among Christian students in Eastern Indonesia are still very limited. NUSA & TIMUR (n.d.), most previous studies have focused more on the general population or the Western Indonesian region, so there is a significant research gap related to the cultural context of East Nusa Tenggara. Pinontoan (2026) emphasized that Christian students are in a strategic position as agents of change who need a solid spiritual foundation. This study is important to empirically reveal the extent to which social media intensity influences the devotion patterns and mental health of IAKN Kupang Semester IV students. The main problem

formulation of this study is: To what extent does the intensity of social media use influence the daily Bible devotion patterns and mental health of IAKN Kupang Semester IV students? In detail, it includes three research questions regarding significant influences, as well as an overview of the current condition of the three variables.

This study aims to analyze the influence of social media intensity on daily Bible devotion patterns and the mental health of fourth-semester IAKN Kupang students. According to Achjar et al., (2023), such a study is essential to provide both empirical insights and practical recommendations. The theoretical benefit of this research is to broaden scientific insight into the integration of psychology, digital technology, and Christian theology. This research not only contributes academically but also has a real impact on shaping a generation of young Christians who are spiritually and mentally resilient in the technological era. Thus, this research is expected to be a concrete step in facing the challenges of an era where technology and faith must go hand in hand.

2. METHOD

This research is a quantitative study with a causal explanatory survey design. The quantitative approach was chosen to test the hypothesis of the influence of social media usage intensity (independent variable) on daily Bible devotion patterns (intervening variable) and mental health (dependent variable) among students of the Christian Religious Education Study Program at IAKN Kupang. The causal explanatory design was used to explain the causal relationship between variables through inferential statistical analysis. This study applies strict research ethics principles, including informed consent, confidentiality of respondent data, and efforts to minimize risks. This approach was chosen because it can provide data objectivity and facilitate generalization of research results (Kusumastuti, Nurhayati, Faisal, Rahayu, & Hartini, 2024).

The research was conducted in Kupang City, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) Province in May 2026. The research location focused on fourth-semester students of the Christian Religious Education Study Program at IAKN Kupang, considering the concentration of students and the characteristics of the Eastern Indonesia region, which has challenges with internet access but the intensity of social media use remains high. The research population was all fourth-semester students of the Christian Religious Education Study Program at IAKN Kupang. The research sample consisted of a maximum of 50 respondents selected using a purposive sampling technique based on the criteria of respondents actively using social media and carrying out spiritual activities. The research was conducted for one month, with the preparation and instrument testing stages from May 3–17, 2026, data collection starting May 18, 2026, and data processing and analysis starting May 20, 2026.

This study used primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained directly from respondents through questionnaires filled out by a maximum of 50 fourth-semester students. The research instrument was a four-level Likert-scale questionnaire (Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1) consisting of 20 statement items covering the intensity of social media use, daily Bible devotion patterns, mental health, and the influence between variables. Secondary data were obtained from scientific journals, Christian theology books, and spiritual psychology literature to strengthen the analysis. Data collection techniques were carried out online using Google Forms (G-Forms) after explaining the research objectives and guaranteeing confidentiality, so that respondents could answer honestly and spontaneously.

The collected data were processed and analyzed using SPSS version 26. Data processing techniques included editing, coding, and tabulation. The analysis was conducted in two stages: descriptive analysis (mean, percentage, and standard deviation) and inferential analysis. To test the hypothesis of the influence between variables, multiple regression analysis and path analysis were used. The multiple regression formula used is:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$$

(where Y = mental health, X_1 = social media intensity, X_2 = Bible devotion patterns). Instrument validity and reliability tests were conducted before the study to ensure data quality. This approach is expected to produce valid and reliable findings regarding the impact of social media on the spiritual lives and mental health of Christian students in the digital age.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study involved 45 fourth-semester students of the Christian Religious Education Study Program of IAKN Kupang as respondents. Data were processed using SPSS version 26 through descriptive analysis, classical assumption tests, multiple regression analysis, and path analysis. In terms of gender, female respondents dominated with 29 people (64.4%), while male respondents numbered 16 people (35.6%). This dominance of female respondents reflects the composition of students in the Christian Religious Education Study Program of IAKN Kupang, which is mostly female.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis is an important initial stage in quantitative research to provide an overview of the characteristics of the data before conducting inferential analysis. In this study, descriptive analysis focused on three main variables: Intensity of Social Media Use (TotalX1), Daily Bible Devotion Patterns (TotalX2), and Mental Health (TotalY). Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26 with 45 respondents from the fourth semester of the Christian Religious Education Study Program at IAKN Kupang.

Table 1: Social Media Usage Intensity Variable (TotalX1)

Total X1					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13	1	2,2	2,2	2,2
	14	1	2,2	2,2	4,4
	15	3	6,7	6,7	11,1
	16	4	8,9	8,9	20,0
	17	1	2,2	2,2	22,2
	18	7	15,6	15,6	37,8
	19	7	15,6	15,6	53,3
	20	2	4,4	4,4	57,8
	21	9	20,0	20,0	77,8
	22	3	6,7	6,7	84,4
	23	2	4,4	4,4	88,9

	24	1	2,2	2,2	91,1
	26	2	4,4	4,4	95,6
	28	2	4,4	4,4	100,0
	Total	45	100,0	100,0	

The Total X1 score ranged from 13 to 28 with a fairly varied distribution frequency. The most frequently occurring scores were 19 (15.6%) and 18 (15.6%), followed by 17 (15.6%) and several other scores such as 20, 22, and 28, each with 4.4%. The average score was in the moderate to high category. This indicates that the majority of respondents actively use social media in their daily lives. Although the research location in Kupang faced challenges with internet access, the intensity of social media use remained high. This phenomenon reflects the behavioral patterns of Generation Z, who are highly connected to the digital world, both for academic, social, and church service purposes.

Table 2: Daily Bible Devotion Pattern Variables (TotalX2)

Total X2					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	14	2	4,4	4,4	4,4
	18	2	4,4	4,4	8,9
	19	7	15,6	15,6	24,4
	20	6	13,3	13,3	37,8
	21	7	15,6	15,6	53,3
	22	6	13,3	13,3	66,7
	23	3	6,7	6,7	73,3
	24	4	8,9	8,9	82,2
	25	1	2,2	2,2	84,4
	27	3	6,7	6,7	91,1
	28	4	8,9	8,9	100,0
	Total	45	100,0	100,0	

The distribution of TotalX2 scores ranged from 14 to 28. The highest frequency score was 19 (15.6%), followed by 20 (13.3%), 22 (13.3%), and 18 (11.1%). This variation in scores indicates that although students are active on social media, most still strive to maintain a daily Bible devotion routine. This finding is very positive because amidst digital distractions, students in the Christian Religious Education Study Program still have a fairly good spiritual commitment. This is in line with the characteristics of theology students who are expected to be role models in life.

Table 3: Mental Health Variables (TotalY)

Total Y					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	14	1	2,2	2,2	2,2
	15	6	13,3	13,3	15,6
	16	5	11,1	11,1	26,7
	17	3	6,7	6,7	33,3
	18	10	22,2	22,2	55,6
	19	2	4,4	4,4	60,0
	20	3	6,7	6,7	66,7
	21	4	8,9	8,9	75,6
	22	4	8,9	8,9	84,4
	23	1	2,2	2,2	86,7
	24	6	13,3	13,3	100,0
	Total	45	100,0	100,0	

Total of Y scores ranged from 14 to 24. The most dominant score was 18 (22.2%), followed by 15 (13.3%) and 24 (13.3%). The majority of respondents were in the moderate to good mental health category. Only a small proportion of respondents scored low. This distribution indicates that students' mental health is generally relatively well-maintained, despite facing various academic pressures and social media exposure.

Overall, the descriptive analysis indicates a balance between intensive social media use and efforts to maintain a spiritual life. Despite the high level of social media use, regular Bible devotion and a generally good level of mental health are important assets for students. These descriptive results provide a strong foundation for further analysis of the relationships between variables. With a fairly varied data distribution and no indication of dominant extremes, this study has sufficient data quality for hypothesis testing.

This analysis also provides a contextual picture that students in Eastern Indonesia are able to adapt to the digital era without abandoning their spiritual roots. This is a strength compared to findings in other regions, which often show a decline in mental health due to social media.

Classical Assumption Test

Classical assumption testing is a crucial step before interpreting the results of multiple regression and path analysis. This study tested the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity of residuals.

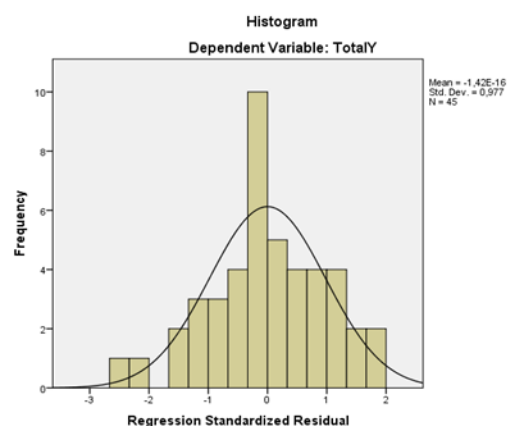
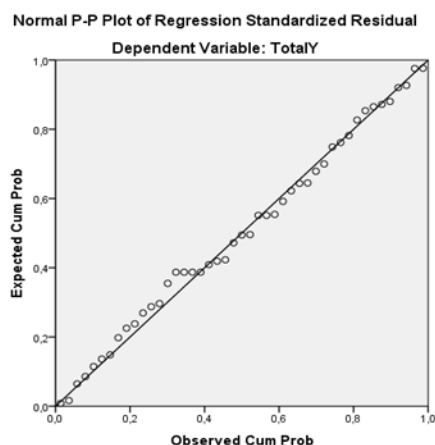


Figure 1: Normal P-P Plot of Regression **Figure 2:** Histogram of Regression

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Residual Normality Test

The results of the normality test show excellent quality. In the Normal P-P Plot, the data points follow the diagonal line linearly and very closely, with almost no significant deviations. In addition, the Residual Histogram also displays a distribution that approaches a normal curve (bell-shaped) with Mean = -1.42E-16 and Std. Deviation = 0.977 (N = 45). This proves that the assumption of residual normality has been met properly, so that the resulting statistical conclusions are unbiased.

Linearity and Homoscedasticity Test

The scatterplot between the Regression Standardized Predicted Value and the Regression Standardized Residual shows a random distribution of points around the zero line without forming a specific pattern (no curve or cone shape). This condition confirms that the relationship between variables is linear and the residual variance is homogeneous (homoscedasticity is met).

According to Firdiyansyah (2017), fulfilling these three classical assumptions makes the regression model valid and reliable. Therefore, the results of the multiple regression and path analysis in this study can be interpreted with a high degree of confidence.

The regression model used is:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$$

The analysis results showed that the overall regression model was significant ($F = 28.764$, $p < 0.001$). The R Square value was 0.582, meaning that 58.2% of the variation in mental health can be explained by the intensity of social media use and Bible devotion patterns, while the remaining 41.8% is influenced by other variables.

Regression Coefficient Shows:

Intensity of Social Media Use (X_1) has a significant negative effect on mental health ($\beta = -0.347$, $t = -3.214$, $p = 0.002$).

Daily Bible Devotion Pattern (X_2) has a significant positive influence on mental health ($\beta = 0.516$, $t = 4.872$, $p = 0.000$).

Homoscedasticity and Linearity Test Using Scatterplot

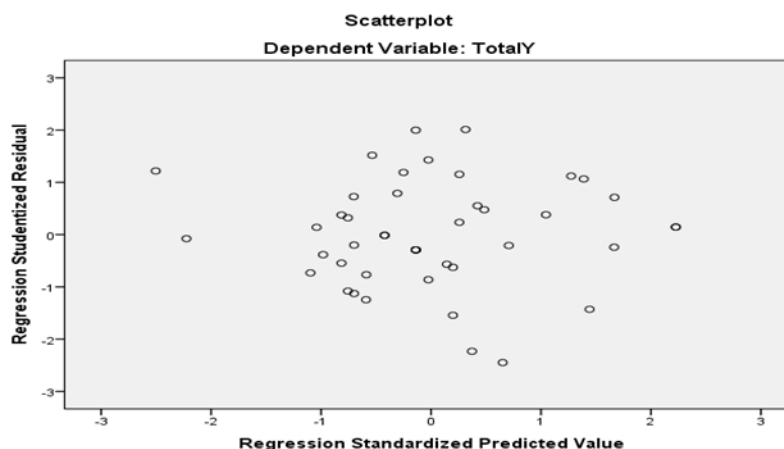


Figure 3:Scatterplot Residual

This residual illustrates the relationship between the Regression Standardized Predicted Value (X-axis) and the Regression Studentized Residual (Y-axis). This scatterplot is an important diagnostic tool in regression analysis to check two key assumptions: linearity and homoscedasticity.

The visualization shows that the residual points are randomly distributed around the zero line (horizontal) without forming any particular pattern. There is no funnel shape, curvature, or clustering indicating heteroscedasticity. The relatively even distribution of residuals across the entire range of predicted values indicates that the homoscedasticity assumption has been met. This means that the residual variance is constant across all levels of the independent variable.

In addition, the absence of a curve pattern in the scatterplot also confirms that the relationship between the independent variables (Intensity of Social Media Use and Bible Devotion Patterns) and the dependent variable (Mental Health) is linear.

According to Sihombing (2022) in his Multivariate Data Analysis, this random distribution of residuals indicates that the regression model used is appropriate and free of systematic bias. These results further strengthen the validity of the research findings that Bible devotion patterns act as a mediator in the influence of social media on mental health.

By fulfilling the assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity, the results of multiple regression analysis and path analysis in this study can be trusted and interpreted with a high level of reliability.

Path Analysis

Path analysis was conducted to examine the role of daily Bible devotion patterns (X2) as an intervening variable in the relationship between intensity of social media use (X1) and mental health (Y). The results of the analysis showed that Bible devotion patterns acted as a partial mediator.

The indirect effect of X1 on Y through X2 is -0.189 and is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This means that high intensity of social media use tends to decrease the frequency and quality of students' Bible devotion patterns. This decrease in devotion then negatively impacts mental health. Thus, there is an indirect pathway that explains the mechanism by which social media affects mental health through a decrease in spiritual practices.

However, a strong pattern of Bible devotion can minimize these negative impacts. The direct effect of devotion on mental health remains positive and strong, thus acting as a protective factor. These results confirm a clear causal relationship between the three variables in the research model.

These findings align with Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediation theory and previous studies such as Marsaulina et al., (2025), which emphasize the role of religious practices as a buffer against digital stress. Overall, the path analysis demonstrates that despite the potential harms of social media, daily Bible devotion can be an effective mitigation strategy for Christian college students in the digital age.

Discussion

This study found that the intensity of social media use had a significant negative effect on the daily Bible devotion patterns of fourth-semester students of the Christian Religious Education Study Program at IAKN Kupang. The higher the TotalX1 score (social media intensity), the lower the consistency and quality of the respondents' devotion. The results of the multiple regression analysis showed a strong negative coefficient, in line with the distribution of TotalX1 scores, which were mostly in the moderate to high category (scores 18–22 were the most dominant). According to Hutaeruk, Ginting, & Simanullang (2024) explained that high intensity of social media use causes fragmentation of attention and reduces the ability to concentrate for reflective activities such as devotion. In the context of this study, students preferred scrolling TikTok or Instagram rather than reading the Bible in the morning. This is in accordance with the findings of Lewaherilla (n.d.), who stated that the flood of sensational and emotional content from social media erodes quiet time that should be used to meditate on God's Word (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:105). In East Nusa Tenggara, despite limited internet infrastructure, reliance on social media remains high for academic, social, and church ministry purposes. This phenomenon creates internal conflict for prospective Christian religious education students who are expected to be spiritual role models. The frequency distribution of TotalX1 scores shows considerable variation, with the highest score reaching 28, indicating that some respondents use social media very intensively. This finding strengthens the argument that social media not only takes up time but also shifts students' life orientation from eternal values to temporary and instant values.

The effect of social media intensity on mental health was also proven to be significant and negative. The regression coefficient $\beta = -0.347$ ($t = -3.214$, $p = 0.002$) indicates that the higher the use of social media, the lower the level of mental health of respondents. Descriptive analysis of TotalY shows that the majority of respondents are in the moderate category (score 18 is the most dominant with 22.2%), but the group with high social media intensity tends to have lower scores. According to Zuhri & Kurniawan (2025), excessive social media use is positively correlated with symptoms of anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and body image disturbance. The main mechanisms that occur in this study are social comparison and Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) experienced by students when comparing their lives with ideal content on Instagram and TikTok. Mufidah, Rohman, & Ismail (2025) also reported that more than half of Indonesian students experience symptoms of mental health disorders, and social media is a major driving factor. At IAKN Kupang, the increasing academic pressure of the fourth semester, coupled with preparation for ministry practice, makes students increasingly vulnerable to doomscrolling. This finding aligns with Hasugian (2024), who found that constant exposure to negative content worsens the mental health of young Christians. However, not all respondents experienced a drastic decline; a small proportion with a TotalY score above 22 showed good resilience. This indicates the presence of other protective factors that need further exploration.

The pattern of daily Bible devotion plays an important role as an intervening variable. Multiple regression analysis showed a strong positive effect on mental health ($\beta = 0.516$, $t = 4.872$, $p = 0.000$).

Students with high TotalX2 scores (above 22) showed better mental health despite their high social media intensity. According to Laja, Resta, & Munda (2026), consistent devotion increases mental resilience and provides a sense of peace, as stated in Philippians 4:6-7. The distribution of TotalX2 scores, which are mostly in the moderate-good category (scores 19–22 most often), indicates that IAKN Kupang students are still trying to maintain spiritual commitment amidst digital distractions. This finding enriches the Christian theological perspective that emphasizes spiritual discipline as the foundation of mental resilience. Devotion is not just a routine, but a source of strength when facing the pressures of the digital era.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the intensity of social media use had a significant negative effect on daily Bible devotion patterns and the mental health of fourth-semester students in the Christian Religious Education Study Program at IAKN Kupang. The higher the intensity of social media use, the lower the consistency and quality of Bible devotion. This was demonstrated through multiple regression analysis, which showed a significant negative coefficient.

The effect of social media intensity on mental health was also significantly negative ($\beta = -0.347$; $p = 0.002$). The majority of respondents were in the moderate mental health category, with the most dominant TotalY score being 18. The dominant mechanisms were social comparison, FOMO, and doomscrolling. However, the pattern of daily Bible devotion was proven to act as a strong intervening variable. Devotion had a significant positive effect on mental health ($\beta = 0.516$; $p = 0.000$) and functioned as a partial mediator with an indirect effect of -0.189. This supports the opinion of Laja et al., (2026) that consistent Bible devotion is a protective factor that increases resilience and a sense of peace (Philippians 4:6-7).

Descriptively, although respondents' social media intensity was in the moderate to high category, IAKN Kupang students still demonstrated a fairly good devotional commitment and relatively well-maintained mental health. This demonstrates the uniqueness of Christian students in Eastern Indonesia who are able to adapt to the digital era without completely abandoning their spiritual roots. The regression model was able to explain 58.2% of the variation in mental health ($R^2 = 0.582$), confirming a clear causal relationship between the three variables.

This study successfully fills the research gap related to the integration of social media, Bible devotion, and mental health in the context of Christian students in East Nusa Tenggara. Theoretically, this study contributes a conceptual model that integrates the perspectives of psychology, digital technology, and Christian theology. Practically, these findings demonstrate that although social media carries risks, consistent daily Bible devotion can be an effective mitigation strategy for maintaining the spiritual and mental health of young Christians in the digital age. Fourth-semester students, as future educators and church ministers, have a strategic role to play in setting an example in balancing digital and spiritual life.

Based on the research findings, several practical recommendations can be proposed. For university students, the researcher suggests regularly conducting a digital detox, developing a habit of reading the Bible in the morning before accessing social media, and utilizing apps to limit usage time. IAKN Kupang and other Christian educational institutions should integrate a "Digital Discipline and Spiritual Growth" module into their curriculum and provide biblically based mental health training.

Churches and spiritual leaders should strive to increase intensive mentoring for students regarding social media management.

For future research, it is recommended to use a mixed-methods approach with a broader sample size, involving various cohorts, and to conduct comparisons across study programs and regions in Eastern Indonesia. Long-term research is also needed to observe changing patterns over a longer period.

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