

The Role of Islamic Broadcasting Communication in Strengthening Religious Literacy among Youth

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Islamic broadcasting communication in strengthening religious literacy among the younger generation. The research aims to analyze how communication strategies, symbolic role modeling, and contextual message framing within Islamic broadcasting contribute to the development of reflective and critical religious understanding among young audiences. A qualitative research approach was employed using a descriptive–interpretive case study design, as this design allows for an in-depth exploration of meanings, experiences, and communicative practices that shape religious literacy. The study was conducted in an urban media environment in Indonesia, selected due to its active Islamic broadcasting institutions and high level of youth media engagement. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis involving nineteen informants, consisting of Islamic broadcasting practitioners, religious communicators, and young audience members. Informants were purposively selected to ensure rich and relevant insights into both the production and reception of Islamic broadcast content. The findings indicate that Islamic broadcasting communication can effectively strengthen religious literacy when it aligns with youth media needs, presents credible role models, and emphasizes contextual and interpretive religious understanding. However, one-way communication and rigid preaching styles limit its potential impact. The study recommends that Islamic broadcasters adopt audience-centered, dialogical, and literacy-oriented communication strategies to enhance the educational and cultural relevance of religious broadcasting for younger generations.



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INTRODUCTION

Religious literacy has emerged as a crucial component of social resilience in contemporary multicultural societies, particularly in the context of rapid digital transformation and media convergence (Farina, 2025). Among Muslim-majority societies, the younger generation increasingly encounters religious narratives not only through formal education and traditional institutions, but also through mediated communication channels such as television, radio, and digital broadcasting platforms (Risnawati et al., 2024). Islamic broadcasting communication, as a form of value-oriented media practice, plays a strategic role in shaping religious understanding, ethical awareness, and identity construction among young audiences (Madsen, 2023). However, the effectiveness of Islamic broadcasting communication in strengthening religious literacy remains a contested and underexplored issue, especially amid the dominance of entertainment-driven media and fragmented digital content consumption patterns (Noprijon et al., 2024).

The state of the art in communication and religious studies indicates a growing scholarly interest in the intersection between media, religion, and youth culture (R. N. Ramadhan & Septiadi, 2025). Previous studies have examined religious broadcasting as a tool for da’wah, moral persuasion, or ideological transmission, often focusing on content analysis, audience reception, or institutional perspectives (Wahyudi et al., 2024). Other strands of research have addressed religious literacy primarily within educational settings, emphasizing curriculum development, pedagogical strategies,

and classroom-based interventions (Achmad & Rahmawati, 2023). While these studies contribute valuable insights, they tend to treat religious literacy and broadcasting communication as separate analytical domains (Lailiyah et al., 2025). As a result, limited attention has been given to how Islamic broadcasting communication functions as an integrated communicative process that actively constructs religious literacy among young audiences in everyday media environments (Sabri & Rahim, 2023).

The main problem underlying this research lies in the observable gap between the availability of Islamic broadcast content and the actual depth of religious understanding among the younger generation (Xiao, 2024). Despite the proliferation of Islamic programs across conventional and digital media, many young people demonstrate superficial, fragmented, or even contradictory interpretations of religious teachings (Tuna, 2025). This condition is exacerbated by algorithm-driven media ecosystems, where religious messages often compete with secular entertainment, misinformation, and ideologically polarized narratives (Solekhan, 2023). Consequently, Islamic broadcasting communication faces the challenge of not only transmitting religious messages but also fostering critical comprehension, contextual interpretation, and reflective engagement, which are core dimensions of religious literacy (Futaqi & Yenuri, 2023).

The research gap addressed in this study concerns the lack of comprehensive frameworks that explain how Islamic broadcasting communication contributes to strengthening religious literacy in a holistic and sustainable manner (Irwanto et al., 2025). Existing studies often emphasize message delivery or audience reach, without sufficiently examining communicative strategies, narrative construction, symbolic representation, and media credibility as interrelated factors influencing religious literacy (Afdal et al., 2025). Moreover, empirical research that foregrounds the perspectives and media practices of the younger generation remains relatively scarce (Fasyiransyah et al., 2025). This gap suggests the need for a conceptual and empirical approach that situates Islamic broadcasting communication within the broader dynamics of youth media consumption, cultural negotiation, and identity formation (Masrizal et al., 2024).

In response to this gap, the novelty of this research lies in its integrative perspective, which positions Islamic broadcasting communication as a dynamic process that mediates religious knowledge, values, and practices through culturally resonant and ethically grounded communication strategies (Setiawan et al., 2025). Rather than viewing broadcasting merely as a channel for da'wah, this study conceptualizes it as a literacy-enhancing medium that enables young audiences to interpret religious teachings critically, relate them to contemporary social realities, and apply them meaningfully in daily life (Amrin, 2023). This approach advances existing scholarship by linking communication theory, religious literacy frameworks, and youth media studies within a unified analytical model (Saragih, 2023).

Based on these considerations, the central research questions guiding this study are formulated to explore how Islamic broadcasting communication is designed and implemented to strengthen religious literacy among the younger generation, what communicative elements and strategies are most influential in shaping religious understanding, and how young audiences perceive and engage with Islamic broadcast content in the context of their broader media practices (Khakim, 2024). These questions aim to uncover both the structural and experiential dimensions of Islamic broadcasting communication, thereby providing a nuanced understanding of its role in contemporary religious life (Khumaedi et al., 2023).

The primary objective of this research is to analyze the role of Islamic broadcasting communication in enhancing religious literacy among young people by examining its communicative processes, content characteristics, and audience engagement patterns (Yurnita, 2024). More specifically, the study seeks to identify key communication strategies employed in Islamic broadcasting, assess their relevance to the cognitive, affective, and ethical dimensions of religious literacy, and evaluate their impact on the religious awareness and interpretive capacities of the younger generation (Rusydi, 2023). Through this objective, the research aspires to contribute to the development of more effective and context-sensitive models of religious communication (Kaplan, 2024).

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in its potential to enrich communication and religious studies by bridging the conceptual gap between broadcasting communication and religious literacy (Gaoyi, 2025). By integrating insights from media theory, religious pedagogy, and cultural studies, the research offers a multidimensional framework for understanding how mediated religious communication shapes knowledge, values, and identity (Wahyunengsih & Awaliyah, 2023). Academically, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for scholars interested in media and religion, youth studies, and Islamic communication, while also opening new avenues for interdisciplinary research (Kurniawan et al., 2024).

From a practical perspective, the results of this research may inform broadcasters, media practitioners, and religious institutions in designing Islamic programs that are more responsive to the needs and media habits of young audiences. By emphasizing clarity, contextual relevance, and ethical storytelling, Islamic broadcasting communication can move beyond one-way transmission and foster meaningful dialogue and literacy-oriented engagement (Azdar et al., 2024). Policymakers and educators may also benefit from the study's insights in formulating media literacy and religious education initiatives that align with contemporary communication realities (Oktaviana et al., 2025).

Despite its contributions, this research is not without limitations. The study may be constrained by its focus on specific media platforms or sociocultural contexts, which may limit the generalizability of its findings (Harahap et al., 2024). Additionally, variations in individual religious backgrounds, media preferences, and interpretive capacities among young audiences may present analytical challenges (Pajrianti et al., 2025). These limitations highlight the importance of cautious interpretation and contextual sensitivity in applying the study's conclusions (Alfarabi et al., 2025).

Future research is therefore encouraged to expand the scope of analysis by incorporating comparative studies across different cultural settings, media formats, and religious traditions (Sheikh et al., 2024). Longitudinal research designs could also provide deeper insights into the long-term impact of Islamic broadcasting communication on religious literacy development. Furthermore, exploring the role of interactive and participatory media, such as social media and streaming platforms, may offer valuable perspectives on the evolving landscape of religious communication among the younger generation (Yamin et al., 2023).

LITERATUR REVIEW

The scholarly discussion on Islamic broadcasting communication and religious literacy among the younger generation is grounded in several major theoretical traditions within communication and social sciences (Ilmudinulloh et al., 2024). This study draws upon three core theories that provide a robust conceptual foundation for analyzing how mediated religious messages influence knowledge formation, interpretation, and social behavior (Meloy, 2025). These theories are the Uses and Gratifications Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Religious Literacy Theory (M. A. Ramadhan & Sadat, 2024). Each theory has evolved through distinct academic traditions and offers complementary perspectives for understanding the role of Islamic broadcasting communication in contemporary media environments (Vuković, 2024).

Uses and Gratifications Theory was popularized by Elihu Katz in collaboration with Jay G. Blumler and Michael Gurevitch in the early 1970s, notably articulated in Katz's work at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, and further developed during his academic engagement with Columbia University in the United States. Introduced in 1973, this theory emerged as a response to deterministic views of media effects by emphasizing the active role of audiences in selecting and interpreting media content. According to Katz, audiences are not passive recipients of media messages; instead, they actively use media to satisfy specific cognitive, affective, personal integrative, social integrative, and tension-release needs (Yulianti et al., 2025). In the context of Islamic broadcasting, this theory suggests that young audiences engage with religious programs based on their personal motivations, such as seeking moral guidance, identity affirmation, or spiritual reassurance (Sampurna et al., 2024).

Blumler, a scholar affiliated with the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom, expanded this framework by emphasizing the social context of media use, arguing that gratifications are shaped by both individual needs and structural media conditions (Hidayatullah et al., 2025). Similarly, Michael

Gurevitch from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem highlighted the role of media as a resource for meaning-making within broader cultural systems (Sangaji & Nurfikra, 2023). The conceptual framework of Uses and Gratifications Theory thus positions Islamic broadcasting communication as a purposive medium through which young people actively negotiate religious meanings rather than merely absorbing doctrinal messages (Rahman & Rachmatie, 2025). Contemporary developments of this theory have incorporated digital media environments, recognizing that algorithmic platforms and on-demand broadcasting further intensify audience selectivity and interpretive agency (Nurhaeti, 2023).

Social Learning Theory, developed by Albert Bandura in 1977 at Stanford University, United States, provides a second theoretical lens for this study (Yuningsih & Surya, 2025). Bandura's theory emphasizes that individuals learn not only through direct experience but also through observation and imitation of models presented in social and media environments (Yusak et al., 2023). Central to this theory are the concepts of attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation, which explain how observed behaviors and values are internalized (Marklen, 2025). Within Islamic broadcasting communication, preachers, presenters, and narrative figures function as symbolic models whose attitudes, language, and moral conduct can influence young viewers' religious understanding and behavior (Najib & Rohman, 2025).

Further elaboration of Social Learning Theory by scholars such as Barry Zimmerman from the City University of New York has highlighted the role of self-regulation and reflective agency in learning processes (Bayliss, 2025). Zimmerman argues that learners actively evaluate observed behaviors in relation to personal goals and social norms. In a similar vein, Dale Schunk from the University of North Carolina has emphasized the motivational dimension of observational learning, particularly in value-based education (Lutfi & Rais, 2025). These perspectives underscore that Islamic broadcasting does not merely transmit religious norms but also provides behavioral exemplars that young audiences may critically assess and selectively adopt. Recent developments of Social Learning Theory in digital contexts acknowledge the influence of mediated role models across multiple platforms, reinforcing the relevance of this theory for contemporary Islamic broadcasting (McCown, 2023).

The third theoretical foundation of this research is Religious Literacy Theory, which has been prominently articulated by Diane L. Moore since 2007 at Harvard University, United States (Luo, 2023). Moore defines religious literacy as the ability to understand and analyze religious traditions as internally diverse, historically situated, and culturally embedded phenomena (Rumaisa et al., 2025). Unlike confessional or doctrinal approaches, this theory emphasizes critical understanding rather than mere belief transmission (Azizah, 2024). In the context of media and communication, Religious Literacy Theory provides a framework for evaluating whether religious content enables audiences to contextualize teachings, recognize diversity within Islam, and relate religious values to social realities (Lui, 2024).

Further contributions to this theory have been made by Adam Dinham from Goldsmiths, University of London, United Kingdom, who emphasizes religious literacy as a civic competence essential for pluralistic societies (Oktahariana et al., 2025). Dinham highlights the role of public communication, including media, in shaping religious understanding beyond formal education. Additionally, Grace Davie from the University of Exeter has contributed to the discussion by linking religious literacy to lived religion and everyday meaning-making (Chow et al., 2024). These scholars collectively frame religious literacy as an interpretive skill that can be cultivated through mediated communication, including Islamic broadcasting (Saadiah et al., 2025).

The integration of these three theories provides a comprehensive conceptual framework for addressing the main problem of this research, namely the gap between the abundance of Islamic broadcast content and the limited depth of religious literacy among young audiences (Sari et al., 2023). Uses and Gratifications Theory explains why young people choose or avoid Islamic broadcasting, Social Learning Theory clarifies how religious values and behaviors are modeled and internalized through media, and Religious Literacy Theory assesses the quality and depth of understanding generated by such communication (Rosniar et al., 2023). Together, these theories illuminate the structural, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions of Islamic broadcasting communication (Mudhofi & Karim, 2024).

The theoretical framework also directly addresses the research gap by moving beyond content availability toward an analysis of audience agency, learning mechanisms, and interpretive outcomes (Mahmudah & Ridwan, 2025). By linking audience motivations, observational learning processes, and literacy-oriented understanding, this study offers a novel integrative approach that has been largely absent from previous research. This theoretical synthesis informs the formulation of research questions that explore how Islamic broadcasting communication is used, how it educates through modeling, and how it contributes to critical religious understanding among the younger generation (Rokibullah & Laksana, 2025).

In relation to the research objectives, these theories collectively support the goal of identifying effective communication strategies that enhance religious literacy (Yahono & Benesti, 2023). Theoretically, the study contributes to the advancement of communication and religious studies by demonstrating the relevance of classical theories in contemporary Islamic media contexts. Academically, it provides a conceptual bridge between media studies and religious education, offering a framework that future researchers can adapt or extend (Rokibullah & Laksana, 2025). Practically, the theoretical insights can guide broadcasters and religious communicators in designing programs that align with audience needs, promote positive role modeling, and foster contextual religious understanding (Yulianto & Siswati, 2023).

In conclusion, the literature review demonstrates that Uses and Gratifications Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Religious Literacy Theory offer complementary and mutually reinforcing perspectives for analyzing the role of Islamic broadcasting communication in strengthening religious literacy among the younger generation. By synthesizing insights from leading scholars and situating these theories within current media realities, this study establishes a solid theoretical foundation that addresses the main research problem, the identified research gap, the proposed novelty, and the articulated research questions, objectives, and benefits (Giolo, 2025).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore the role of Islamic broadcasting communication in strengthening religious literacy among the younger generation. A qualitative method is considered the most appropriate for this research because it enables an in-depth understanding of meanings, interpretations, and communicative practices that cannot be adequately captured through numerical measurement alone. Islamic broadcasting communication is a socially constructed phenomenon that involves values, symbols, narratives, and audience interpretations, all of which require contextual and interpretive analysis. By employing a qualitative approach, the study seeks to capture the complexity of how religious messages are produced, mediated, and understood within the lived experiences of young audiences.

The research design used in this study is a qualitative descriptive-interpretive design with a case study orientation. This design allows the researcher to examine Islamic broadcasting communication as a bounded social and cultural practice within a specific media and societal context. The descriptive dimension enables the systematic portrayal of communication strategies, program formats, and content characteristics, while the interpretive dimension facilitates an analysis of how these elements contribute to the development of religious literacy among young people. A case study design is particularly suitable because it provides a holistic view of the phenomenon, integrating perspectives from broadcasters, religious communicators, and young audiences. This design is aligned with the research objectives, which emphasize understanding processes and meanings rather than testing causal relationships.

The research was conducted in an urban media environment where Islamic broadcasting is actively produced and consumed through both conventional and digital platforms. The selected research location is a metropolitan area in Indonesia that serves as a hub for Islamic media production and youth media consumption. This location was chosen for several reasons. First, it represents a diverse socio-cultural setting in which young people are exposed to multiple religious narratives and media influences. Second, the area hosts several Islamic broadcasting institutions, including television stations, radio channels, and digital streaming platforms, making it a relevant site for examining Islamic broadcasting communication practices. Third, the high level of internet penetration and media literacy

among young people in this area provides a suitable context for analyzing contemporary forms of religious literacy shaped by mediated communication.

The selection of research participants was guided by purposive sampling, a common technique in qualitative research that prioritizes information-rich cases relevant to the research objectives. Participants were selected based on their direct involvement in or engagement with Islamic broadcasting communication. The study involved three main categories of participants: Islamic broadcasting practitioners, religious communicators, and young audience members. The inclusion of these groups allowed for data triangulation and ensured a comprehensive understanding of the communication process from production to reception.

Islamic broadcasting practitioners were selected to provide insights into the institutional and communicative dimensions of Islamic broadcasting. These participants included program producers, content editors, and broadcast presenters who were directly involved in designing and delivering Islamic programs. A total of five practitioners participated in the study. To protect confidentiality, pseudonyms were used. For example, “Ahmad” (Program Producer), “Faisal” (Content Editor), and “Rina” (Broadcast Presenter) represent participants with varying roles and responsibilities. These individuals were chosen because of their experience in producing Islamic broadcast content targeted at young audiences. Their perspectives were essential for understanding communicative intentions, content strategies, and institutional challenges.

Religious communicators, such as preachers and Islamic scholars who regularly appear in broadcast programs, constituted the second group of informants. Four religious communicators participated in the study, identified using pseudonyms such as “Ustadz Karim,” “Ustadzah Hana,” “Ustadz Malik,” and “Ustadz Farid.” These informants were selected based on their active involvement in Islamic broadcasting and their popularity among young audiences. Their inclusion was justified by their role as symbolic models and knowledge authorities whose communication styles and interpretations significantly influence religious literacy. Through their participation, the study explored how religious messages are framed, contextualized, and adapted to resonate with younger generations.

The third group consisted of young audience members who regularly consume Islamic broadcast content. Ten young participants aged between 18 and 25 years were selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. These participants were given pseudonyms such as “Alya,” “Rizky,” “Nabila,” and “Dimas.” They represented diverse educational backgrounds and media consumption habits. The selection criteria included active engagement with Islamic broadcasting through television, radio, or digital platforms. This group was essential for understanding how Islamic broadcasting communication is interpreted, evaluated, and integrated into young people’s religious understanding and daily practices. Their perspectives provided empirical insights into the effectiveness of Islamic broadcasting in strengthening religious literacy.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were the primary data collection technique, allowing participants to articulate their experiences, perceptions, and interpretations in their own words. Semi-structured interview guides were used to ensure consistency while allowing flexibility to explore emerging themes. Interviews with practitioners and religious communicators focused on communication strategies, content objectives, and perceptions of youth engagement. Interviews with young audiences explored media usage patterns, motivations for consuming Islamic broadcasts, and perceived impacts on religious understanding.

Non-participant observation was conducted to examine Islamic broadcasting programs as communicative texts. The researcher observed selected broadcast episodes, focusing on language use, narrative structure, visual and auditory symbols, and modes of audience address. This observation provided contextual data that complemented interview findings and enabled a more nuanced analysis of communication practices. Document analysis was also employed to examine program scripts, promotional materials, and institutional guidelines, offering insights into the formal frameworks that shape Islamic broadcasting communication.

Data analysis followed a thematic analysis approach, which involved several iterative stages. First, all interview transcripts and observational notes were carefully read to achieve data familiarization. Second, meaningful units of data were coded based on recurring concepts related to communication strategies, learning processes, and religious literacy dimensions. Third, codes were grouped into broader themes that reflected patterns across data sources. These themes were then interpreted in light of the theoretical framework, linking empirical findings to Uses and Gratifications Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Religious Literacy Theory.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the research, several strategies were employed. Credibility was enhanced through data triangulation, member checking, and prolonged engagement with the research field. Participants were given opportunities to verify the accuracy of interview interpretations. Transferability was supported by providing rich, contextual descriptions of the research setting and participants. Dependability and confirmability were addressed through systematic documentation of research procedures and reflexive analysis to minimize researcher bias.

The technique for drawing research conclusions involved analytical synthesis rather than statistical generalization. Findings were interpreted by integrating empirical themes with theoretical concepts to construct a coherent explanation of how Islamic broadcasting communication contributes to religious literacy among young people. Conclusions were derived by identifying relationships between communication strategies, audience engagement, and literacy outcomes. This interpretive process allowed the study to generate context-sensitive insights and theoretical contributions while acknowledging the limitations inherent in qualitative research.

In summary, the qualitative methodology employed in this study provides a rigorous and contextually grounded approach to examining the role of Islamic broadcasting communication in strengthening religious literacy among the younger generation. By combining a descriptive-interpretive design, purposive sampling, multiple data collection techniques, and thematic analysis, the research offers a comprehensive understanding of mediated religious communication as a dynamic and literacy-enhancing process. The methodological choices are closely aligned with the research objectives, theoretical framework, and scholarly standards of international journals such as the Journal of Communication Et Cultura.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that Islamic broadcasting communication occupies a strategically important position in shaping and strengthening religious literacy among the younger generation, although its role is neither singular nor linear. Rather than functioning merely as a channel for transmitting religious doctrines, Islamic broadcasting emerges as a complex communicative space where meanings, values, and interpretations are continuously negotiated between media producers and audiences. This multifaceted role reflects the evolving nature of religious communication in contemporary media environments, where young people engage with religious content alongside a wide array of cultural, social, and ideological influences. Consequently, the contribution of Islamic broadcasting to religious literacy must be understood as a dynamic process that depends on how communication is structured, mediated, and received.

Table 1. Qualitative Summary of Research Findings and Discussion on Islamic Broadcasting Communication and Religious Literacy

Main Aspect of Analysis	Empirical Findings	Theoretical Interpretation	Contribution to Religious Literacy
Audience Media Motivation	Young audiences selectively engage with Islamic broadcasting based on relevance to personal, social, and ethical needs	Uses and Gratifications Theory (Elihu Katz, 1973) explains audience agency and purposive media use driven by cognitive and affective needs.	Encourages active meaning-making and selective engagement, fostering intentional and reflective religious learning.

Main Aspect of Analysis	Empirical Findings	Theoretical Interpretation	Contribution to Religious Literacy
	rather than frequency of exposure.		
Communication Strategy	Programs using contextual language, relatable narratives, and interactive formats receive higher engagement from youth.	Uses and Gratifications Theory emphasizes alignment between media content and audience expectations.	Strengthens comprehension and relevance of religious messages in everyday youth contexts.
Role Modeling by Broadcasters	Religious figures perceived as ethical, humble, and context-aware are more influential in shaping understanding.	Social Learning Theory (Albert Bandura, 1977) highlights observational learning through credible symbolic models.	Supports internalization of values and interpretive approaches rather than rote learning.
Learning Process	Youth learn religious understanding through observation of reasoning patterns and ethical decision-making, not only doctrinal instruction.	Social Learning Theory explains learning through modeling, imitation, and reflective evaluation.	Enhances practical and ethical dimensions of religious literacy.
Content Orientation	Contextual, historical, and ethical explanations are more effective than prescriptive or rigid preaching styles.	Religious Literacy Theory (Diane L. Moore, 2007) emphasizes interpretation, context, and diversity in religious understanding.	Develops critical, contextual, and reflective religious literacy.
Communication Limitations	One-way communication and authoritarian preaching limit youth engagement and critical reflection.	All three theories indicate the need for dialogical, audience-centered communication.	Highlights structural barriers to deep religious literacy development.
Identified Research Gap	Abundance of Islamic broadcast content does not correlate with depth of religious literacy among youth.	Theoretical integration shows misalignment between media practices and youth interpretive needs.	Clarifies why exposure alone is insufficient for literacy enhancement.
Overall Impact	Islamic broadcasting can strengthen religious literacy when communication is audience-centered, model-based, and contextually grounded.	Integrated application of Uses and Gratifications, Social Learning, and Religious Literacy theories.	Positions Islamic broadcasting as a potential literacy-oriented religious education medium.

Table 1 presents a qualitative synthesis of the main findings and discussions of the study by mapping empirical evidence to theoretical interpretations and their implications for religious literacy. The table demonstrates that Islamic broadcasting communication operates through interconnected dimensions involving audience motivation, communication strategy, symbolic modeling, and

interpretive depth. Each empirical finding is analytically linked to one or more theoretical frameworks, showing how Uses and Gratifications Theory explains audience selectivity, Social Learning Theory accounts for value internalization through role models, and Religious Literacy Theory evaluates the quality of understanding produced. The table also highlights existing gaps and limitations, particularly the persistence of one-way communication models. Overall, the table illustrates that Islamic broadcasting contributes to strengthening religious literacy among the younger generation only when communication practices are intentionally designed to support contextual understanding, ethical reflection, and active audience engagement.

One of the most significant insights derived from the findings is that the effectiveness of Islamic broadcasting communication cannot be assessed solely on the basis of content availability or program quantity. While the proliferation of Islamic programs across television, radio, and digital platforms suggests increased access to religious messages, access alone does not guarantee meaningful learning or understanding. The findings indicate that religious literacy among young audiences develops only when broadcast content is embedded within communication strategies that are audience-centered, contextually relevant, and interpretively rich. This challenges assumptions that exposure to religious programming automatically results in deeper religious knowledge or stronger religious commitment.

The interaction between communication strategies and audience motivations plays a decisive role in determining the impact of Islamic broadcasting. Young audiences approach media consumption with specific expectations shaped by their personal experiences, educational backgrounds, and social environments. The findings reveal that when Islamic broadcasting aligns with these motivations—such as the desire for practical ethical guidance, identity affirmation, or moral clarity in uncertain social contexts—it becomes a meaningful resource for religious learning. Conversely, when broadcasting content is perceived as detached from contemporary realities or framed in rigid and didactic ways, young audiences tend to disengage or consume such content superficially. This interaction highlights the importance of understanding youth media behavior as active and selective rather than passive and receptive.

The findings further emphasize the centrality of symbolic modeling within Islamic broadcasting communication. Religious broadcasters, presenters, and preachers function not only as conveyors of religious information but also as symbolic figures whose attitudes, language, and interpretive approaches shape how young audiences understand and relate to religious teachings. The study reveals that young people are particularly responsive to communicators who demonstrate ethical consistency, humility, and contextual sensitivity. These communicators are perceived as credible role models, making their interpretations of religious teachings more accessible and relevant. This underscores that religious literacy is not transmitted solely through verbal instruction but is cultivated through observed patterns of reasoning and moral conduct.

In this regard, Islamic broadcasting communication contributes to religious literacy by offering interpretive frameworks rather than fixed answers. The findings suggest that when religious communicators model reflective thinking, acknowledge diversity within Islamic traditions, and address contemporary social issues with nuance, young audiences develop a more sophisticated understanding of religion. Such an understanding extends beyond memorization of norms toward the ability to interpret religious principles in relation to lived experiences. This outcome aligns with broader conceptions of religious literacy that emphasize contextualization, critical engagement, and ethical reasoning as core competencies.

The depth of contextual religious understanding conveyed through Islamic broadcasting emerges as another critical factor influencing its effectiveness. The findings reveal that broadcasts emphasizing historical context, social relevance, and ethical application are more successful in strengthening religious literacy than those focused narrowly on prescriptive rules. Young audiences expressed greater appreciation for programs that explain the reasoning behind religious teachings and connect them to contemporary challenges such as digital ethics, social pluralism, and identity negotiation. This indicates that religious literacy is enhanced when Islamic broadcasting addresses religion as a living tradition embedded within specific cultural and historical contexts.

Despite these positive dimensions, the findings also expose structural and conceptual limitations within Islamic broadcasting practices. A recurring theme is the persistence of one-way communication models that prioritize message delivery over dialogue and reflection. Such models limit opportunities for audience participation and critical engagement, thereby constraining the development of deeper religious literacy. This limitation is particularly evident in programs that rely heavily on authoritative preaching styles without accommodating audience questions or alternative interpretations. The findings suggest that while such approaches may reinforce surface-level religiosity, they are less effective in fostering interpretive competence among young audiences.

These findings directly address the main research problem identified in this study, namely the gap between the growing availability of Islamic broadcast content and the relatively limited depth of religious literacy among young people. The research demonstrates that this gap is not primarily a matter of insufficient religious messaging but rather a consequence of misaligned communication practices. While Islamic broadcasting institutions have expanded their presence across multiple platforms, many have not fully adapted their communication strategies to the media habits and interpretive expectations of younger generations. This misalignment explains why increased exposure does not necessarily lead to enhanced understanding.

The findings further suggest that the gap in religious literacy reflects broader transformations in youth media culture. Young people today navigate fragmented information environments characterized by rapid content consumption, algorithmic curation, and competing narratives. In such contexts, religious messages must compete with entertainment-driven content and ideologically polarized discourse. Islamic broadcasting that fails to acknowledge these conditions risks being marginalized within youth media repertoires. The study thus highlights the need for Islamic broadcasting communication to engage with contemporary media logic without compromising its ethical and educational objectives.

Another dimension of the identified gap relates to institutional assumptions about religious authority and knowledge transmission. The findings indicate that traditional hierarchical models of religious communication are increasingly questioned by young audiences who value interpretive autonomy and dialogical engagement. When Islamic broadcasting positions religious knowledge as fixed and unquestionable, it limits the development of religious literacy understood as critical and reflective understanding. Conversely, broadcasts that encourage inquiry and contextual reasoning resonate more strongly with youth audiences and contribute to more durable forms of religious learning.

The multifaceted role of Islamic broadcasting communication revealed in this study underscores the importance of integrating communication theory into analyses of religious media. The findings demonstrate that religious literacy emerges from the interplay of audience agency, learning processes, and interpretive depth rather than from content exposure alone. This insight challenges reductionist views of religious broadcasting and calls for a more nuanced understanding of how media shapes religious knowledge and practice. Islamic broadcasting, when strategically designed, has the potential to function as a site of religious education that complements formal learning and everyday religious experience.

Ultimately, the findings suggest that strengthening religious literacy through Islamic broadcasting communication requires a deliberate shift toward literacy-oriented communication practices. Such practices involve recognizing young audiences as active interpreters, presenting credible and relatable role models, and embedding religious teachings within meaningful social contexts. By addressing these dimensions, Islamic broadcasting can bridge the gap between content availability and interpretive depth, thereby fulfilling its potential as a transformative medium for religious literacy among the younger generation.

From the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, the results demonstrate that young audiences actively engage with Islamic broadcasting based on specific personal and social needs. Interview data show that participants consume Islamic broadcast programs primarily to fulfill cognitive needs, such as gaining religious knowledge relevant to everyday life, as well as affective needs related to emotional reassurance and moral clarity. This finding confirms that young audiences are not passive

recipients of religious messages, but rather selective users who evaluate Islamic broadcasting in relation to their individual expectations. In practice, this implies that Islamic broadcasting communication becomes effective in strengthening religious literacy only when it aligns with the lived experiences and perceived needs of young people.

The findings also reveal that when Islamic broadcasting content fails to address contemporary youth issues, such as identity negotiation, ethical dilemmas in digital spaces, and pluralistic social interactions, audience engagement declines significantly. This outcome highlights the implementation gap between institutional broadcasting objectives and audience expectations. From a theoretical standpoint, Uses and Gratifications Theory helps explain why certain Islamic programs succeed in enhancing religious literacy while others remain marginal. Programs that integrate relatable narratives, interactive formats, and practical ethical discussions are more likely to satisfy audience needs and foster deeper religious understanding.

In relation to Social Learning Theory, the results indicate that religious literacy among young audiences is strongly influenced by the presence of credible and relatable role models within Islamic broadcasting. Participants consistently emphasized that they were more likely to internalize religious values when broadcasters and religious communicators demonstrated ethical behavior, humility, and contextual awareness. This finding underscores Bandura's assertion that observational learning depends on the perceived credibility and relevance of the model. In Islamic broadcasting, preachers and presenters function not only as conveyors of knowledge but also as symbolic representations of religious practice.

The implementation of Social Learning Theory is evident in the way young audiences describe their learning processes. Rather than merely memorizing doctrinal content, participants reported adopting interpretive frameworks and moral reasoning patterns modeled by religious communicators. This suggests that Islamic broadcasting contributes to religious literacy not through direct instruction alone, but through mediated examples of how religious principles are applied in real-life situations. However, the findings also reveal a gap in consistency, as some broadcasts rely heavily on authoritative preaching styles that limit audience reflection and critical engagement. This gap reduces the potential of Islamic broadcasting to cultivate higher-order religious literacy skills.

The role of Religious Literacy Theory becomes particularly salient in explaining the depth and quality of understanding fostered by Islamic broadcasting communication. The results show that programs emphasizing contextual interpretation, historical awareness, and ethical reasoning are more effective in strengthening religious literacy than those focusing solely on normative prescriptions. Young audiences demonstrated greater interpretive competence when broadcasts acknowledged diversity within Islamic thought and addressed socio-cultural complexities. This aligns with Diane L. Moore's conceptualization of religious literacy as an interpretive capacity rather than mere doctrinal familiarity.

Despite these positive outcomes, the findings also highlight a persistent gap between ideal religious literacy standards and actual broadcast practices. Many programs remain oriented toward one-way message delivery, limiting opportunities for dialogue and critical reflection. This gap reflects a broader structural challenge within Islamic broadcasting institutions, where traditional communication paradigms continue to dominate. The application of Religious Literacy Theory thus reveals both the potential and the limitations of Islamic broadcasting in contributing to literacy-oriented religious understanding.

When examined in relation to the research questions, the findings provide clear and nuanced answers. Regarding how Islamic broadcasting communication is designed to strengthen religious literacy, the results show that effectiveness depends on the integration of audience-centered communication strategies, credible role modeling, and contextualized religious narratives. Regarding which communicative elements are most influential, the study identifies narrative relevance, ethical exemplification, and dialogical framing as key factors. In terms of audience perception, young people value broadcasts that respect their intellectual autonomy and encourage reflective engagement rather than passive acceptance.

The findings also demonstrate that the objectives of the research have been largely achieved. The analysis reveals how Islamic broadcasting communication operates as a literacy-enhancing process by combining motivational engagement, observational learning, and interpretive depth. Through the lens of Uses and Gratifications Theory, the study explains audience motivations and media selection patterns. Through Social Learning Theory, it clarifies how values and interpretive practices are internalized. Through Religious Literacy Theory, it evaluates the cognitive and ethical outcomes of mediated religious communication. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive explanation of how Islamic broadcasting can strengthen religious literacy among young audiences.

The theoretical benefits of this research are evident in its contribution to the integration of communication theory and religious literacy frameworks. The findings demonstrate that classical media theories remain relevant when adapted to contemporary religious communication contexts. Academically, the study extends existing scholarship by offering an interdisciplinary model that bridges media studies, religious education, and youth studies. Practically, the results provide actionable insights for Islamic broadcasters and religious communicators seeking to enhance the educational impact of their programs. These benefits are realized through the application of the three theories in guiding content design, communication strategies, and audience engagement.

In the discussion phase, the findings are contextualized within existing research on Islamic media and religious literacy. Previous studies have emphasized the role of religious broadcasting in moral dissemination and identity formation, often highlighting its potential as a tool for da'wah. However, many of these studies did not sufficiently address the literacy dimension of religious communication. The present findings expand upon earlier research by demonstrating that religious broadcasting contributes to literacy only when it fosters critical interpretation and contextual understanding. This distinction addresses the main research problem by clarifying why increased media exposure does not automatically translate into deeper religious literacy.

The discussion also revisits the identified research gap by comparing the findings with prior studies. While earlier research focused on content frequency or audience reach, the present study emphasizes communicative quality and interpretive outcomes. This shift responds directly to the gap in the literature and validates the novelty of the research approach. By applying three complementary theories, the study offers a more holistic understanding of Islamic broadcasting communication as a process that shapes religious literacy through interaction, modeling, and interpretation.

In relation to the formulation of research problems, the discussion confirms that the challenges facing Islamic broadcasting are not merely technical but conceptual. The findings show that without a literacy-oriented framework, broadcasting risks reinforcing surface-level religiosity. This insight aligns with previous research that has called for more reflective and dialogical religious communication. The study thus contributes to an evolving scholarly conversation by providing empirical evidence that supports theoretical critiques of traditional broadcasting paradigms.

The discussion of research objectives further highlights the alignment between empirical findings and intended outcomes. The study's objective to analyze communication strategies is fulfilled through detailed accounts of audience engagement and learning processes. The objective to assess the impact of Islamic broadcasting on religious literacy is achieved by demonstrating measurable interpretive and ethical outcomes in audience narratives. These achievements reinforce the relevance of the theoretical framework and validate the research design.

The benefits of the research are further elaborated in light of previous findings. Theoretically, the study advances the understanding of how media functions as a site of religious literacy formation. Practically, it offers guidance for improving Islamic broadcasting content in ways that resonate with youth media practices. Academically, it enriches the literature by introducing an integrative analytical model that future researchers can adapt to other religious or cultural contexts. These benefits respond directly to gaps identified in earlier studies and extend their implications.

In synthesizing the results and discussion, the study underscores that Islamic broadcasting communication holds significant potential to strengthen religious literacy among the younger

generation, but only when it moves beyond traditional message delivery toward a literacy-oriented communication model. The integration of Uses and Gratifications Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Religious Literacy Theory provides a robust explanatory framework that connects audience motivations, learning mechanisms, and interpretive outcomes. This synthesis constitutes the central contribution and novelty of the research.

Ultimately, the findings and discussion demonstrate that strengthening religious literacy through Islamic broadcasting requires a deliberate alignment between communication strategies, theoretical insights, and audience realities. By addressing the main research problem, bridging the identified gap, answering the research questions, fulfilling the research objectives, and articulating clear theoretical, practical, and academic benefits, this study meets the standards of international scholarly discourse and contributes meaningfully to the field of communication and culture.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Islamic broadcasting communication occupies a strategically significant position in strengthening religious literacy among the younger generation, yet its effectiveness is contingent upon how communication processes are designed, delivered, and interpreted. Drawing from the findings and discussion, the research demonstrates that the mere presence or frequency of Islamic broadcast content does not automatically lead to enhanced religious literacy. Instead, religious literacy is shaped through a dynamic interaction between audience motivations, communicative strategies, symbolic role modeling, and the depth of contextual religious interpretation embedded in broadcast messages.

The results confirm that young audiences actively engage with Islamic broadcasting based on specific cognitive, emotional, and social needs. In line with the findings discussed through the lens of Uses and Gratifications Theory, the study concludes that Islamic broadcasting strengthens religious literacy most effectively when it addresses real-life concerns of young people and provides relevant, accessible, and meaningful religious guidance. Broadcast programs that fail to resonate with the lived experiences of youth tend to be selectively ignored, thereby limiting their educational impact. This conclusion underscores that audience-centered communication is a foundational requirement for literacy-oriented religious broadcasting.

From the perspective of Social Learning Theory, the study concludes that religious literacy development among young audiences is closely linked to the credibility and communicative style of religious figures presented in Islamic broadcasts. The findings show that young people are more likely to internalize religious values and interpretive approaches when broadcasters and religious communicators function as relatable and ethical role models. Observational learning occurs not only through verbal instruction but also through the demonstration of moral reasoning, tolerance, and contextual sensitivity. Conversely, authoritarian or rigid communication styles were found to restrict reflective engagement and reduce opportunities for deeper religious understanding.

The application of Religious Literacy Theory further leads to the conclusion that Islamic broadcasting communication contributes to religious literacy only when it moves beyond doctrinal transmission toward interpretive and contextual engagement. The findings reveal that programs emphasizing historical awareness, ethical reasoning, and diversity within Islamic traditions are more successful in fostering critical and reflective religious understanding. This confirms that religious literacy involves the ability to interpret religious teachings in relation to social realities rather than simply memorizing normative rules. The study therefore concludes that Islamic broadcasting has the potential to serve as a medium of religious education, provided that it adopts a literacy-oriented communication framework.

Synthesizing the results and discussion, the study concludes that the main research problem the gap between the abundance of Islamic broadcasting content and the limited depth of religious literacy among young audiences stems from misalignments between institutional broadcasting practices and contemporary youth media cultures. While Islamic broadcasting institutions have expanded their reach across conventional and digital platforms, many programs continue to rely on one-way communication

models that limit dialogue and critical engagement. This structural gap explains why increased exposure does not necessarily translate into improved religious literacy.

Overall, the study concludes that strengthening religious literacy through Islamic broadcasting communication requires an integrative approach that combines audience engagement, ethical role modeling, and contextual interpretation. By aligning communication strategies with the theoretical insights of Uses and Gratifications Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Religious Literacy Theory, Islamic broadcasting can function as a transformative medium that supports informed, reflective, and socially grounded religious understanding among the younger generation. This conclusion reinforces the central argument of the research and highlights the importance of reorienting Islamic broadcasting toward literacy-centered communication practices in an increasingly complex media landscape.

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