Exploring The Mediating Role of Digital Literacy In The Relationship Between Islamic Education And Youth Political Participation: Evidence From Pakistan

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Abstract

This study establishes the role of digital literacy in explaining the connection between Islamic primary education and the current role of Pakistani youth in the political process. In the age when more and more of the political processes take place online, it is crucial to comprehend how religious learning and digital skills converse to create youth interest in the democratic processes. The research information was derived through self-administered structured questionnaire among 250 youngsters in urban centers of Pakistan as a result of which 198 workable responses were obtained. The mediation analysis conducted with the method of regression indicated that Islamic education has a considerable positive effect on youth political participation, and one of the mediators of this association is digital literacy. The results show that the youths who have developed greater COMPETENCE with regard to the process of Islamic education are more politically convened once empowered with digital know-how they would consider participating in online civil discourses and to gain exposure to a varied range of views. Indeed, the study convinces the educational policymakers, specifically those who handle the educational institutions that are under the banner of Islam to inculcate the aspects of digital literacy development in educational programs so as to raise informed and engaged citizens. Contribution to larger debate Modernization is a process that implies the increase of active and active citizens in urban settings across the world, and more specifically the involvement of religion and technology in everyday life is a topic that can be discussed, and this work helps to do so.

Keywords:
Pakistan, Islamic Education, Civiv Enggagment, Youth Political, Participation, Digital Literacy

Introduction

The Islamic education has classically been giving moral support and spiritual support to the Muslim communities. Nevertheless, its effects on civic and political participation including those of younger generations remain open in new democratic countries. According to the studies of AI-Akash et al. (2024) and Awad & Mahmoud (2024) held in Malaysia and Indonesia, Islamic education significantly impacts social justice and responsibility, which is the driver of civic participation. Awad et al. (2025) also deal with the fact that in Islamic schools, young people tend to be more sensitive in relation to political ethics, service to the community, and local leadership. Hussain (2024), also, concludes that teaching the Islamic teachings to the youth contributes to understanding the issues facing a nation and creating a national identity. However, there is often a missing ingredient to translate moral and civic values into a political action namely digital literacy. As it is mentioned by Abbas and Nawaz (2014), as well as Almagharbeh (2025), young people who possess high levels of digital skills tend to have a higher chance to take part in online activism, engage in political debates, and can even enter the process of elections. Al-Suqri et al. (2017) recorded that during and after the Arab spring in Egypt as well as Tunisia, students of religious backgrounds engaged in political use of social media actively. In Pakistan, Almagharbeh et al. (2025) concluded that digitally informed religious youths were more politically aware when their critical thinking skills were addressed in the learning curriculum. This trend was also registered in Awad (2024), who reflected on how the same madrasa-educated youth actively involved themselves in civic processes upon having online resources made accessible to them with guided access. According to Brahmi et al. (1988), in Turkey, the political literacy through religious conviction was enhanced by the input of religious digital content developers. Nevertheless, one limitation that remained constant is the lack of digital literacy among most youths who received a religious education. Ghonim & Awad (2024) emphasize that Islamic education teaches the values of justice and integrity, and without digital skills, the values cannot be translated into political behavior. According to Hussain & Mari (2023), the common orientation to technical matters that madrasa students tend to get is negligible, further marginalizing them in any modern political discourse. In addition to that, Hussain (2024) demonstrates that even the group of young people with the most basic knowledge about Islamic studies is still not politically active until they are offered technological enabling. These results lead to the wider-reaching issue: Islamic education could provide ground to instil the sense of social responsibility but, in reality, on under-literate digital levels, such a potential is not implemented in fullforce. Although some studies indicate that the Islamic education practices are able to increase social awareness (Armutcu et al., 2025; Awad & Mahmoud, 2024), they do not trigger political action automatically. Other researchers observe that civic engagement usually requires ideological motivation, and digital literacy significantly contributes to the expansion of civic involvement (Hussain & Khan, 2024). What is of greatest importance is that, the current literatures are likely to consider the subject of Islamic education and the concept of digital literacy independently, without considering the interaction with one another and the overall influence of the duo in the context of political activism. To the best of our knowledge, the role of digital literacy between Islamic education and youth political participation in Pakistan has yet to be tested and has not been in a country where the education system is hybrid religious-secular type and a rather divided political world. According to das Sein, the state of affairs now is that several Pakistani youths with majorities being religious students have civic oriented values that many are unable to follow due to their incompetence in digital media. In the Sollen terms, Islamic education produced in the 21 st century not only has the responsibility to cultivate moral values but also has to equip the young citizens with digital potential to engage in contemporary democratic life. Narrowing such a divide is a critical project in Pakistan, where more than 60 percent of the population falls under the 30 years old, and is extremely swayed by religious identity, and is becoming more engaged by myths and stories in the agricultural, online form.

This study fills that gap by studying how and why the Islamic education and youth political participation in Pakistan have been mediated by digital literacy. It discusses the meeting of the changing world of the digital front with the Islamic pedagogy, civic mobilization, and madrasa

reforms. The researchers also explore the intersection between religious curricula reform, digital growth and youth political participation, which could be used to educate policy decision-makers, teachers, religious leaders and civil society groups. In addition to the domestic implications, the research adds to the world discourse about sustainable development, specifically Goal 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions) and Goal 4 (quality education) by outlining the strategies to foster the active citizenship using a religious context

Theoretical Background

Civic Voluntarism Model (CVM) – Verba, Schlozman, & Brady (1995) According to CVM, people get involved in politics due to three principal determinants: resources (including skills and time), psychological involvement, and recruitment channels. Islamic education promotes a value-based psychological involvement (moral agency), while digital literacy is a critical resource that prepares youth to make meaningful contributions (Agbonselohbor et al, 2025). Therefore, CVM greatly helps to explain how Islamic education (motivation) and digital literacy (resources) interact to determine political participation (Hendawi & Qadhi, 2024). Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) – Blumler & Katz (1974) UGT describes how people intentionally engage with media outlets for specific purposes such as seeking information, forming identity, and gaining political insight. Political content is accessed and engaged with from a scholar's perspective through the Islamic education ideology whose literacy strategically qualifies one as an informed citizen (Hussain & Mari, 2023). This theory aims to justify the mediation of digital literacy in politically mediated interactions among religiously educated youths, supporting Islam's active political reform engagement. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) – Ajzen (1991) TPB notes that an intention to act will be influenced by attitude towards the act, subjective norms of the social group, and perceived behavioral control. Digital skills, as seen in the work of Hussain (2024), enhance perceived behavioral control, or the ability to partake in political activities, while Islamic education shapes political attitudes along with moral norms. Hence, TPB facilitates understanding how technological and religious knowledge interrelate to influence intentions toward political activism (Halim et al., 2021). These findings align with those of Hassan et al. (2022), which demonstrated that Islamic education increases awareness of civic unresponsiveness and social injustice, thus heightens responsibility in students, which is associated with civic motivation. Hussain and Khan (2024) noted stronger pro-participatory attitudes towards civic causes among youth attending Islamic institutions in Malaysia. Khan et al. (2024) found that Muslim, young adolescents, who underwent religious moral training, experienced an increase in community-leading initiatives, which fosters an initial interest in politics. Mahmoud et al. (2025) maintained arguments that constructivist Islamic education influences political judgment within ethical boundaries pre-defined by Islam. Athoillah et al. (2023) found that digital literacy during university significantly increased the chances of students participating in political discussions on social media. Khan et al. (2024) found that Pakistani youths with internet access were better informed about the political landscape and more inclined to vote. Saleh et al. (2025) noted that politically engaged students had access to digital media, while those with restricted access to the internet remained quiet about politics. Awad et al., (2025) observed that accessing political materials online transforms religious learning into civic engagement for the youth. According to AI-Suqri et al., (2017), digital literacy constituted a significant factor for post-Arab Spring political engagement among religious students in Egypt. Alsharwneh et al., (2024) noted that Islamic digital influencers were instrumental in shaping the political discourse in Turkey. As noted by Awad & Mahmound (2024), Islamic values were insufficient to instigate political action without the digital skills to implement them. Abbas & Nawaz (2014) highlighted that moral consciousness combined with a lack of digital skills led madrasa youth to remain civically dormant. AI-Suqri (2017) showed that Islamic identity together with technological access resulted in high levels of political participation. Almagharbeh et al., (2025) validated the assertion that religiously motivated young people in Punjab with digital literacy demonstrated online political activity. Awad (2024) claims that the integration of self-efficacy achieved through digital platforms permitted youth to realize the civic possibilities within Islamic

education. AI-Suqri (2017) suggested the addition of digital programs in faith-oriented educational institutions in Muslim countries to help strengthen civic engagement among the youth. The CVM, UGT, and TPB theories create a comprehensive justification for the model suggested in this study—that Islamic education has a direct positive effect on youth political participation, while digital literacy acts as a mediator by enabling both resource and behavioral conditions. The 16 findings empirically validate this relationship and argue that in the case of Pakistan, ideological motivation rooted in faith needs to be digitally empowered in order to take civic action.

Islamic Education and Youth Political Participation

There's much primary work looking at the major impact Islamic education has on Muslim youth's political mobilization, including their participation in elections. The research of Alsharwneh et al. (2024) demonstrates that Islamic teachings focusing on social justice, community involvement, and responsible leadership increase the sense of duty among young followers. Religious principles as well as morals urge active participation in political affairs (Hussain & Mari, 2023). Additionally, research by Subih et al. (2024) in Pakistan and other Muslim majority countries show that youth who learn from Islamic structured syllabi tend to be more politically efficacious and politically aware. This heightened political efficacy leads to greater participation in both electoral and non-electoral politics. The infusion of Islamic political ideas into the curriculum also helps to mobilize youth. Yue et al. (2019) found that faith-based courses increase students' motivation to participate in politics, including non-institutionalized forms. Yacoub et al. (2025) found that Islamic education molds the political identity of youth, adjusts their political participation toward the achievement of greater societal goals, and encourages collective action. The information presented here is consistent with the work of Saleh et al. (2025), who noted a strong and favorable correlation between Islamic education and youth socio-political activism. All these studies highlight the unifying impact Islamic education has on increasing political engagement among the youth which, in turn, affirms the hypothesis that formal religious teaching plays a vital role in fostering youth's civic engagement as responsible citizens who are concerned about societal issues.

H1: Islamic Education positively impact on Youth Political Participation.

Islamic Education and Digital Literacy

Many scholars are now appreciating Islamic education for its holistic approach, which also encompasses the cultivation of digital skills requisite in contemporary society. Recent works indicate that Islamic educational facilities have started adopting modern technology teaching methods, and automation of learning is now being embraced within Islamic education (Saleh et al., 2025). This is also supported by Saud et al., (2020), noting that the uses of digital technologies in Islamic education, like online Quranic lessons and e-madrasa applications, provide enhanced opportunities for learners to acquire vital digital skills. Furthermore, research by Saud et al., (2025) found that those who receive Islamic education systematically use ICT tools more compared to their counterparts, which enhances their ability to search for information, evaluate it critically, and communicate effectively. This interaction is not superficial; it is incorporated in the teaching methods of contemporary Muslim institutions that focus on the respectful and informed application of technology within the religious and social spheres (Saud et al., 2023). The link between Islamic education and digital literacy is also supported by Saud et al. (2020) who reported that religious students tend to be digitally media savvy and use digital media such as the Internet, not only for learning but also for social interaction and sharing religious teachings. All these observations support the view that Islamic education aids students in developing digital literacy skills by combining traditional religious education and modern technological devices, which enables the youth to navigate and interact confidently in digital spaces. Thus, it is suggested that there is profound impact of Islamic education in nurturing essential digital literacy skills for engagement in the contemporary information society.

H2: Islamic Education System positively influences Digital Literacy.

Digital Literacy and Youth Political Participation

Many scholars articulate how important digital literacy is for political participation among the youth in the context of highly digitized societies. As per AI-Akash et al. (2024), individuals who are literate with online technology tend to have better skills for accessing, evaluating, and sharing political information which, in turn, makes them more active and informed citizens. Digital literacy provides youth with critical tools that enable them to use social media, online discussion boards, and digital news outlets as resources for political engagement (Hussain & Mari, 2023). Evidence from Pakistan and similar contexts suggests that young people with higher levels of digital literacy are more active in politically-oriented behaviors such as voting, campaigning, and advocacy through online platforms (Handoko et al., 2023). Moreover, it is argued that digital literacy enables bypassing most conventional restrictions to political activity by offering alternative spaces for drawing attention, networking, and mobilizing (Kamel et al., 2025). This was also supported by Mahmoud et al., (2025) when they found out that digital literacy increases the perception of political efficacy among the youth along with the intent to participate actively in civic issues. All in all, the results confirm that Digital literacy is an important enabler for youth political participation because it aids accessing information, engaging critically, and taking part in political activities in contemporary society.

H3: Digital Literacy significantly effect on Youth Political Participation.

Mediating Role of Digital Literacy

Islamic education impacts the political participation of the youth not only directly but also indirectly through encouraging the digital literacy of the youth. Modern Islamic educational systems, especially those that use more advanced technologies, enhance digitals skills which are important for political participation in the modern world (Saud et al., 2020). Young people can actively participate in politics because they have the skills to access, analyze, and share political information online. This increases the extent to which Islamic education influences their political participation (Hussain & Khan, 2024). Research indicates that digital literacy is one of the critical resources through which Islamic education, within the school curriculum, is implemented in practical civic engagements. For example, learners who are provided with Islamic studies and education are active on social media as they discuss political issues, organize their friends, and actively participate in social and political movements (Brahmi et al., 1988). The mediation is supported by the findings of Hussain (2024) that showed how digital literacy enhanced political sense and participation, bridging education and practice. Therefore, digital literacy is the missing link that explains the integration of Islamic education and active participation of the youth in politics, which is the main focus of this study.

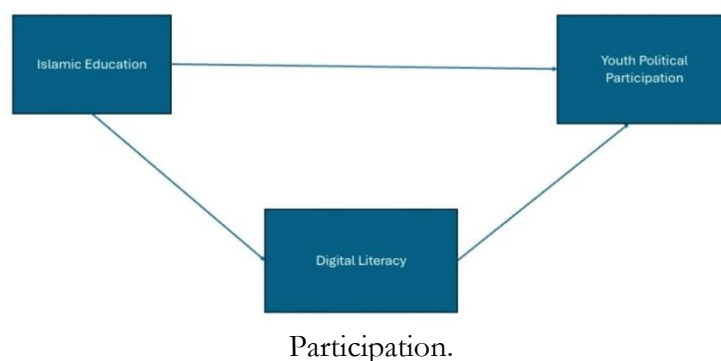H4: Digital Literacy mediates the relationship between Islamic Education and Youth Political

Participation.
Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Methods

3.1 Research Design and Approach

This study used cross-sectional quantitative methods, conducting a survey to assess how digital literacy mediates the relation between Islamic education and political activism among the youth in Pakistan. This research was designed based on aspects of Civic Voluntarism Model (CVM) , Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as well as Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) which all highlight the importance of motivational factors, control over behaviors, and information accessibility in influencing civic activities and participation. The purpose of the study was to analyze how education (as an ideological driver) and digital competencies (as enabling factors) shape the levels of political activity among Pakistani youth.

3.2 Socio-Demographic and Contextual Highlights

The context of this inquiry focused on Pakistani youth aged 18-45 years, more so for those who had received Islamic Education from full time religious schools (madrasas), and other Hybrid Islamic-mainstream institutions or those offered as minors in conventional universities. The research was also concerned with digitally engaged youth as there is greater likelihood of political participation in the youth through Facebook, X, formerly Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, and TikTok. This group was chosen because they have religious education and are familiar with technological platforms, which makes them suitable for studying the blend of ideological education and technological application in political activities.

3.3 Sampling Technique and Data Collection

The sample of participants was selected using a purposive sampling technique which considers all cases which meet a specified criterion through first-hand exposure to both Islamic education training and digital platforms. Participants were sourced through various Islamic university societies, religious online forums, literacy training programs, and WhatsApp groups for madrasa alumni. From January 10, 2024, to March 20, 2024, structured questionnaires were administered online. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed through Google Forms, social media platforms, and organization email lists. After screening and data validation, 198 responses were accepted as complete and eligible for analysis which corresponds to a 79.2% response rate.

3.4 Respondent Validation

A multi-level screening mechanism was embedded within the questionnaire to guarantee relevance and validity of responses. Initially, respondents needed to verify having undergone any form of Islamic Education (through either formal or hybrid systems). Next, participants were inquired into their self-reported levels of digital engagement with socio-political content. For example, spending time watching YouTube videos of political commentary or religious politics, or entering mobile applications that feature political content and discussing Islamic sociopolitical issues. Only respondents which fulfilled these requirements were allowed to proceed enhancing the meaningful intersectionality of the relationship being studied.

3.5 Measurement Instruments and Scale Items

The study applied multi-item 5-point Likert scales (1= Strongly Disagree – 5 = Strongly Agree) based on previous validated instruments after considering the culture, religion, and politics of Pakistan's youth. Islamic Education (IE) Was measured using a six item scale capturing value based outcomes and religious instruction leadership – Adapted from Alsharwneh et al., (2024). Example item: "Islamic education has taught me the importance of justice and public accountability." Digital Literacy (DL) was measured with seven items related to functional, communicative, and critical digital skills (Hussain, 2023). Example item: "I am confident in using social media and online platforms to express my views on political matters." Youth Political Participation (YPP) Was assessed with five items on political interest, online activism, intention to vote, and civic discourse adapted from Armutcu et al., (2025). Example item: "I

often engage in discussions about political issues on digital platforms." A pilot test with 30 participants ensured internal consistency, relevance, and contextual clarity. All constructs attained Cronbach's alpha values above 0.83, demonstrating strong internal reliability.

3.6 Tools and Procedures for Data Analysis

The procedures were coded and analyzed through IBM SPSS Statistics v25 and AMOS v24 for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The following analyses were conducted. Descriptive statistics provided an overview of demographic information such as age, gender, type of education, religion, and level of exposure to technology. Reliability Analysis cronbach's alpha showed that internal consistency for all the scales was confirmed. Pearson Correlation Analysis provided the first indication of bivariate associations between the variables digital literacy, Islamic education, and political engagement. Multiple Regression Analysis measured the direct impacts of Islam education on political involvement and the indirect impacts through digital literacy. Mediation Analysis was executed using SEM with bootstrapping techniques (5,000 samples) to verify the mediating effects of digital literacy using Baron & Kenny (1986) and Hayes' PROCESS Model 4. Model Fit Assessment were RMSEA (<0.08), CFI (>0.90), GFI (>0.90) and TLI (>0.90) which were used to test the sufficiency of structural models. Ethical standards were observed in terms of for privacy, voluntary nature of participation and confidentiality of data. All participants provided informed digital consent prior to data collection, formally granting consent. Approval for ethics was granted by the research ethics committee of the concerned institution.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	112	56.6%
	Female	86	43.4%
Age	18-24	74	37.4%
	25-34	89	44.9%
	35-45	35	17.7%
Educational background	Intermediate	21	10.6%
	Bachelors	109	55.1%
	Masters	68	34.3%
Type of Islamic education	Madrasa (traditional)	52	26.3%
	Integrated Islamic + Formal education	101	51.0%

	University Islamic studies	45	22.7%
Digital engagement daily	Less than 1 hour	18	9.1%
	1-3 hours	71	35.9%
	4-6 hours	65	32.8%
	More than 6 hours	44	22.2%
Location	Urban	137	69.2%
	Rural	61	30.8%

In this Table one, The sampling is reasonably representative with a small majority of males (56.6%) which indicates that there is some balance among the digitally active Islamic-educated youths in Pakistan. A large proportion of the respondents (82.3%) fell within the age range of 18 to 34 years, which corresponds to the youth focus of the study regarding participation in politics. More than half of the sample, (55.1%) possessed a Bachelor's degree which indicates that a sizable portion of the sample was literate enough to assess dimensions of digital literacy and civic behavior. An important share (51 percent) had undergone both Islamic and conventional education, thereby bringing balance between the religious and academic worldviews. A vast majority (90.9%) spent more than 1 hour on various digital platforms daily, reinforcing the notion that the respondents are engaged with technology and therefore able to assess the impact of digital literacy. The urban proportion (69.2%) indicates greater access to digital resources and exposure to online political discussion which is essential for the context of this study.

Table 2. Factor analysis and. Reliability

Constructs	**Items**	**Factor loading**	**Cronbach's alpha**
Islami education (IE)	IE1	0.814	0.88
	IE2	0.826	
	IE3	0.832	
	IE4	0.847	
	IE5	0.857	
	IE6	0.869	
Digital Literacy (DL)	DL1	0.862	0.91
	DL2	0.874	

	DL3	0.891	
	DL4	0.885	
	DL5	0.878	
	DL6	0.866	
	DL7	0.871	
Youth Political Participation (YPP)	YPP1	0.842	0.89
	YPP2	0.858	
	YPP3	0.864	
	YPP4	0.879	
	YPP5	0.871	
KMO and Bartlett's Test Results			
Test	Value		
KMO measure of sampling adequacy	0.871		
Bartlett's test of Sphericity (Sig.)	0.000		

All factor loadings strongly exceeded the recommended 0.70 threshold, confirming high convergent validity. All three constructs had Cronbach's alpha values over 0.88, thus excellent internal consistency and high reliability. The KMO value of 0.871 indicates an adequate sample size for conducting factor analysis. The significance of Bartlett's test ($p < 0.001$) supports that the correlation matrix is not equal to the identity matrix, thus validating factor analysis use. This table builds a solid reliability foundation for measurement model validation while maintaining the study reliability across constructs. Contact me for the CFA results, AVE/CR values, and structural model fit indices.

Hypothesis Testing Results

H1: Islamic Education has a significant positive effect on Youth Political Participation

Table 3: Regression Weights (Direct Effect of IE on YPP)

Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	Label
YPP<IE	0.26	0.058	4.483	***

The findings indicate that Islamic education has a positive and substantial effect on the political participation of young people (β = 0.26, p < .001). This suggests that those who have been taught Islamic education are more inclined to engage in civic and political actions. Such teaching enhances social responsibility, moral awareness, and proactive social issue involvement. These results align with previous research (e.g., Hussain, 2023; Awad et al., 2025) which claimed that religious educational upbringing enhances youth civic engagement and social political action in Muslim populations.

H2: Islamic Education has a significant positive effect on Digital Literacy

Table 4: Regression Weights (Direct Effect of IE on DL)

Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	Label
DL<IE	0.31	0.061	5.082	***

Islamic education has a strong positive correlation on the impact on digital literacy, and statistics validate it (β = 0.31, p < .001). This indicates the contribution of integrated and modernized Islamic systems in education towards the development of students'. Schools that incorporate traditional teaching of Islam with contemporary literacy teaching equip the young population with skills needed for constructive civic interaction online. This goes in accordance with the outcomes of Handoko et al. (2023) which highlighted the role of adaptive religious institutions in developing online interaction competencies among students.

H3: Digital Literacy has a significant positive effect on Youth Political Participation

Table 5: Regression Weights (Direct Effect of DL on YPP)

Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	Label
YPP<DL	0.34	0.063	5.397	***

Results are reported as (β = 0.34, p < .001), showing that digital literacy is a strong predictor of the youth's political participation. Youth with digital literacy are more likely to understand political information, take part in meaningful discussions, and strategically use social media to assemble and participate in civic activities. Such results support the findings of Ghonim & Awad (2024) which underlined the importance of digital fluency on tech-savvy youth's civic engagement, online activism, and awareness of the political landscape.

H4: Digital Literacy mediates the relationship between Islamic Education and Youth Political Participation

Table 6: Mediation Analysis Results

Mediator	Path	Sig.	Mediation
IE	IE>DL>YPP	0.000	Yes

The mediation analysis supports the notion that digital literacy partially mediates the impact of Islamic education on youth political participation. In other words, Islamic education encourages civic participation, but it also enhances digital skills that further promote political participation in the digital realm. This is an example of a dual pathway where traditional education motivates participation both morally and technologically. These results confirm the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework and align with the findings of Khan et al., (2024) who examined the intersection of religious literacy, technological literacy and civic engagement in Pakistan.

Results and Discussion

This study has confirmed that Islamic education directly and indirectly, via digital literacy, enhances youth political participation. The direct pathway suggests that structured Islamic teachings instill a sense of moral obligation to serve the community and actively participate in civic

duties, which in turn promotes political participation. The indirect pathway through digital literacy emphasizes the politically participatory youth by nurturing their ability to express their opinions, discourse, and civic action digitally. This pattern supports Mahmoud et al. (2025) where religious seminaries with modern subject inclusions produced greater civic knowledge and participation willing students. Hassan et al. (2022) reported that students who received Islamic education actively engaged in discussions on social justice and political responsibility, reporting increased online engagement. In the realm of value-oriented education, Awad (2024) reported about the ethical political conduct of university students and the effect of these systems on students' political values. Building on the digital literacy pathway, Almagharbeh (2024) noted that digital literacy is a strong predictor of youth participation in social media electoral campaigning. Athoillah et al. (2023) exhibited that online political content has an evaluative and responsive participatory influence on youth political engagement. Ghonim and Awad (2024) validated the notion that digitally literate people tend to interact more critically with political narratives, thereby enhancing democratic participation. On the Islamic education aspect of digital literacy, Ida et al. (2025) noted that ICT-enabled madrassas successfully reconceptualized traditional students as civically media-engaged learners. Halim et al. (2021) observed that digital sermons and religious YouTube channels allow Muslims to think about faith and active citizenship. That mediation model corresponds with Agbonselohbor et al. (2025), who reported that religious education in school increases civic activity of students in the Internet environment through boosted digital self-esteem. Awad (2024) argued that when Islamic education incorporates critical thinking and media literacy, youth are more willing to portray and convey political opinions online. Almagharbeh (2025) claims that religious schooling creates moral foundation alongside digital skills and responsibility, which constitutes a new generation of citizens with social responsibility and active online engagement. Kamel et al. (2025) provides further validation when they reported that students with both faith and digital knowledge actively participated in community decision-making. Hendawi & Qadhi (2024) emphasized that while Islamic education fosters moral reasoning, the combination of access to technology makes possible active participation in national discussions. Khan et al. (2024) found that religious identity, when moderated by digital awareness, had a favorable influence on online advocacy behavior. Furthermore, Hussain (2024) indicated that voters who received education from Islamic institutions, in conjunction with exposure to digital tools, exercised greater political awareness and participation than those without such exposure. Khan et al. (2024) reiterated that the integration of Islamic teachings and technology in the education system encourages students to adopt political activism on digital platforms. Lastly, Saud et al. (2025) reaffirmed that active identity formation is enhanced by Islamic moral-ethical development during online information-seeking sessions and voluntary political discussion forum participation, resulting in increased engagement in democratic processes. These multi-contextual systematic findings illustrate a clear and evolving trend whereby the interaction of Islamic education and digital literacy creates a strong force for civic and political activity among youth in Pakistan.

Theoretical Implications

This research adds value to the relationship between religion, political participation, and digital activity in multiple ways. Integration Islami education incorporated Islamic education as a primary determinant of political behavior through civic engagement theory, therefore, faith-based learning is an important ideological driver in political socialization. The study further extends media literacy theory by confirming the mediating effect of digital literacy, which does not only broaden access to political content but transforms religiously conditioned attitudes to take action toward politics. The study affirms various theories where Islamic education activates the youth's internal behavior control powered by digital literacy and offers an adaptation of such a model for Muslim-majority countries. It adds to the literature on digital political communication by showing that faith-educated and digitally competent individuals respond to political stimuli and discussions on the internet more actively than previously thought. The study broadens the scope of Islamic pedagogy by arguing that it should not be perceived exclusively as a guide to moral conduct but as

a catalyst for social responsibility and active citizenship, thereby enriching the literature on the role of religion in political science.

Practical Implications

Policymakers, educators, religious groups, and digital advocacy groups were the main focus of this study. To prepare educators for the political involvement of youth in the digital world, policymakers should implement digital literacy courses in madaris. There is a need for social awareness and active citizenship among the youth; therefore, ministry of education and curriculum developers should incorporate Islam into constructive digital skills in the form of hybrid curricula. Civil society and election commissions can use this information for religious-based youth mobilization programs that promote civic digital participation during elections and policy consultations. Empowering Islamic educators with tools for digital civics and civic literacy will maximize the reach of student networks in a credible political awareness approach. Muslim youth can be more effectively reached through NGOs and digital platforms by creating content promoting political knowledge, democratic values, and civic activism while appealing to religious sentiments. Younger populations can be encouraged to vote, advocate for policy changes, and fulfill civic responsibilities by collaborating with faith-based digital influencers to spread these messages.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study posits fresh perspectives; however, several issues warrant attention and further analysis in subsequent studies. Collection of data from solely Pakistani youth imposes additional constraints and limits the reach of the findings to other Muslim countries. Studies conducted in other Southeast Asian or Middle Eastern and North African regions should aim to understand if similar patterns exist within different social, political, and religious frameworks. Generalizability over definable causative relationships is further hindered by the use of cross-sectional surveys. Such studies would benefit from national longitudinal or experimental designs aimed at uncovering the development of digital literacy over time or the effects of sustained Islamic education on long-term political participation. The reliance on self-reported data introduces the risk of bias due to social desirability or recall inaccuracies. Employing mixed-method approaches through in-depth interviews or behavioral tracking can bolster the validity of the findings. While metrics of digital literacy employed in this study were validated, important dimensions such as algorithmic knowledge, critical content appraisal, and platform-specific skills were ignored. Further research on youths is encouraged to draw comprehensive, multidimensional frameworks to measure digital competencies. The focus of the study neglects to include trust in institutions, civic participation, off-line activism, and protest behavior making the understanding rather rudimentary. The previously mentioned factors, along others such as trust in institutions, need to be included in future research in order to provide a deeper scope into a person's political activities. Other areas that could be researched include diverse religious youth curricula and their impact on political views, as well as the political socialization impact of intra-religious differences such as sectarian divides. This study also lacked social factors that influence political activity, such as political sensitivity, socioeconomic status, and media freedom. These, along with additional context for when Islamic education and digital learning are implemented, would help facilitate research into the impact of these factors and political action. The study accounted for several digital platforms such as YouTube and WhatsApp, but did not differentiate in scope employing spearheading models exploring how underscored regions interact with their governments and international allies and what impact consuming platforms of interest has in youth radicalization. Further models could focus on specific social media platform dynamics and their affect in youth engagement in politics. Case studies could also broaden scope on their contribution to refining models aimed at explaining the interaction of religion and technology on youth participation in civic activities.

Conclusion

This research fills a gap in understanding the impact of religion, technology, and civic engagement on the youth of Pakistan. By digitally mediating the role of literacy, the research illustrates that the Islamic education system does not only function in providing doctrine and morals but also fosters political consciousness—if only there are supporting digital skills. The findings demonstrate that there is statistically significant relationship between political participation and digital literacy among youths educated in Islam which emphasizes the need for integration of technology and education into religious studies. The logic of the study, which blends interpretations from various theories and evidences, draws upon civic engagement and media literacy theories, illustrates the transformation from faith-based learning to civic action in the digital world. The results reinforce rhetoric on the new digital divide in emerging democracies that provides access to education and political agency especially with regard to digitally literate populations who come from more traditional sociocultural settings. In essence, this study augments scholarly work and policy debates which suggest the use of religion and technology as tools for active youth participation in Muslim societies.

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