



Assyfa Journal of Islamic Studies

AJIS. Vol. No. (2026) Page 170-181

e-ISSN: [2988-7399](#) p-ISSN: [2988-7399](#)



[DOI: 10.61650/ajis.v4i2.1254](#)

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Effect of Social Media Use Intensity and Peer Responses on Narcissistic Behavior in Students

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Article History: Received: 30 Jun 2026 • Revised: 25 Jul 2026 • Accepted: 20 Aug 2026 • Published: 20 Aug 2026

ABSTRACT

The development of social media use among adolescents provides opportunities for individuals to present themselves, gain attention, and receive social responses from their peer environment. These conditions may be associated with the emergence of narcissistic behavior tendencies among students. This study aims to determine the influence of social media use intensity and peer responses on students' narcissistic behavior. This research employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. The population consisted of eighth-grade junior high school students in Central Java Province, with a sample of 400 students selected through purposive sampling from several schools. Data were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire based on the indicators of each variable. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression to examine the partial and simultaneous effects of the variables. The results indicate that social media use intensity and peer responses influence students' narcissistic behavior. This study contributes to the field of guidance and counseling by providing a basis for developing services that encourage healthier social media use and social interactions among students.

Keywords: social media intensity, peer response, narcissistic behavior, junior high school students, adolescents



ABSTRAK

Perkembangan penggunaan media sosial pada remaja memberikan ruang bagi individu untuk menampilkan diri, memperoleh perhatian, serta menerima respons sosial dari lingkungan pertemanan. Kondisi tersebut dapat berhubungan dengan munculnya kecenderungan perilaku narsistik pada siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh intensitas penggunaan media sosial dan respon teman sebaya terhadap perilaku narsistik siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Populasi penelitian adalah siswa kelas VIII Sekolah Menengah Pertama di Provinsi Jawa Tengah dengan sampel sebanyak 400 siswa yang dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling dari beberapa sekolah. Pengumpulan data dilakukan menggunakan angket skala Likert berdasarkan indikator setiap variabel. Analisis data menggunakan regresi linear berganda untuk mengetahui pengaruh variabel secara parsial dan simultan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya pengaruh intensitas penggunaan media sosial dan respon teman sebaya terhadap perilaku narsistik siswa. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi bagi bidang bimbingan dan konseling dalam mengembangkan layanan yang mendukung penggunaan media sosial serta interaksi sosial yang lebih sehat bagi siswa.

Kata Kunci: intensitas media sosial, respon teman sebaya, perilaku narsistik, siswa SMP, remaja

How to cite: Melani, F., Zamroni, E., & Kiswanto, A. (2026). The Effect of Social Media Use Intensity and Peer Responses on Narcissistic Behavior in Students. *Assyfa Journal of Islamic Studies*, 4(2), 170–181. <https://doi.org/10.61650/ajis.v4i2.1254>

1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental phase of transition from childhood to adulthood which is characterized by changes in physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects (Yuliati, 2022). Adolescence is an important period because individuals begin to seek and build their identity through the process of understanding themselves, exploring various roles, and forming a commitment to an identity that is considered appropriate (Izzani et al., 2024). This developmental process makes adolescents need the right direction and assistance in order to be able to face the changes that occur and develop social and emotional skills positively (Suryana et al., 2022). In this process, adolescent identity development is influenced not only by individual development but also by the social environment, including family, peers, schools, and social media, all of which play an important role in shaping how adolescents perceive themselves and interact with others (Puteri et al., 2025).

The development of digital technology has caused social media to become an integral part of the lives of teenagers. Social media is not only used as a means of communication, but also as a space for teenagers to express themselves, build social relationships, and gain recognition from the surrounding environment. Teenagers are one of the active groups of social media users because of the need to interact and gain social acceptance. Adolescents like social media because of the assumption that the more active a person is in using social media, the more attractive the individual will look and follow the development of their social environment (Sari, 2021).

The increasing use of social media provides various benefits for adolescents, but it can also affect behavior patterns if it is not accompanied by the ability to control themselves. Adolescents who

are not able to control the use of social media properly tend to use social media excessively so that it can affect the way individuals view themselves and others (Fatimah et al., 2025). Social media provides opportunities for teenagers to share experiences, activities, and build self-image that they want to display to the public. This condition can encourage the emergence of the need to gain social attention and recognition from other users.

High-intensity social media use is often associated with attention-seeking behaviors and the formation of an ideal self-image. Teenagers can make social comparisons through social media so that there is an urge to show the best side of themselves. The use of social media that is not balanced with self-control can give rise to unhealthy behaviors because individuals begin to use social judgment as a basis for building their own concept (Oruh & Agustang, 2024). Excessive social media use may also be associated with an increased tendency toward narcissistic behavior among adolescents (Zariah et al., 2023). Social media provides space for adolescents to show various self-advantages, but excessive use can increase the tendency to narcissistic behavior due to the need to gain attention and appreciation from the social environment (Sari, 2021).

Narcissistic behavior in adolescents is related to the individual's need to gain attention, appreciation, and recognition from others. This behavior can be seen through the tendency to over-display oneself, expect praise, and make social judgment an important part of building self-concept. In the context of social media, narcissistic behavior can arise when adolescents use social media as a means of gaining social validation rather than as a medium of communication. Adolescents with this tendency focus more on how they are perceived by others through activities carried out on social media (Zaeni, 2022).

The social response received from the surrounding environment also plays a role in reinforcing narcissistic behavior in adolescents. Positive responses from peers through likes, comments, and other forms of appreciation can be a strengthening for teenagers to continue to display themselves on social media. Peer responses can encourage adolescents to repeat behaviors aimed at gaining social attention and recognition (Saripah et al., 2023). Narcissistic behavior in adolescents is thus not only related to the intensity of social media use, but is also influenced by the form of social response received from the peer environment.

Adolescence is a period that is vulnerable to the emergence of narcissistic behavior because individuals are still in the stage of forming self-identity. The need to be accepted by the social environment causes adolescents to tend to pay attention to how they are judged by others. Narcissistic behavior in adolescents can be characterized by a need for attention, a desire to receive praise, and a tendency to over-express themselves. This behavior can still be part of adolescent development if it is within reasonable limits, but it can become a problem if it develops excessively and uncontrollably (Harahap, 2022).

Harahap's research (2022) shows that the intensity of Instagram social media use has a significant relationship with the tendency to narcissistic behavior in adolescents. Social media is used as a means of self-image and gaining social recognition from the surrounding environment. Social media is also a space for adolescent self-identity formation because of the attention and judgment from other users which can affect the way adolescents see themselves (Engkus et al., 2017). Narcissistic behavior that develops excessively is a concern in the field of education because it can

have an impact on social relationships, empathy skills, and dependence on the judgment of others (Choirunnisa et al., 2020).

The school environment has an important role in helping students develop a positive self-concept and understand the wise use of social media. Assistance through guidance and counseling services is needed so that students are able to build healthy social relationships and not rely excessively on appreciation from the surrounding environment (Engkus et al., 2017). The development of student behavior is influenced not only by individual factors, but also by the social environment that interacts with adolescent life.

Peers are one of the social environments that have a great influence on adolescent development. During this time, individuals begin to increase social involvement outside the family and tend to seek acceptance from peer groups. Individuals who have narcissistic tendencies generally need appreciation from others that can be obtained through responses to their activities on social media, such as likes and comments (Lestari & Wulayani, 2024). Peer conformity can also be related to narcissistic behavior because adolescents tend to conform to their group in order to gain social acceptance, including in how to present themselves on social media (Setiyowati et al., 2023).

The observations conducted by the researcher at SMP Negeri 3 Jekulo showed that students have social media accounts and actively use them as a means of interacting with their peers. Students continue to follow various information and trends through social media even though there are restrictions on the use of gadgets in the school environment. These activities cause students to obtain various forms of social responses such as attention, comments, and responses to shared uploads. This condition shows the phenomenon of social media use related to the need to gain social recognition from the surrounding environment.

Previous research has shown that the intensity of social media use is related to narcissistic behavior in adolescents. Research by Choirunnisa et al. (2020) explains that the use of social media is related to adolescents' needs to gain social attention and recognition. Liang's research (2021) shows that the higher the intensity of social media use, the tendency for adolescent narcissistic behavior is also increasing. Fauziah (2020) also explained that the activity of uploading content on social media is related to the need of adolescents to obtain social attention. Research by Setiyowati et al. (2023) shows that the peer environment is related to students' narcissistic behavior through the process of self-adjustment to social groups.

Although previous studies have shown a relationship between social media use intensity and peer-related factors with narcissistic behavior, previous research has generally examined these two variables separately, and therefore has not provided a comprehensive understanding of their simultaneous effects on students' narcissistic behavior. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effects of social media use intensity and peer responses on narcissistic behavior among students. This study is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing narcissistic behavior in early adolescents.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with multiple linear regression analysis methods. A quantitative approach was used to test the influence between the variables of social media use intensity and peer responses to students' narcissistic behavior. The independent variables in this study consisted of the intensity of social media use (X_1) and peer response (X_2), while the bound variable was the narcissistic behavior of students (Y). Multiple linear regression analysis was used because this study involved two independent variables that were thought to affect one bound variable, either partially or simultaneously.

The population in this study is junior high school students in Central Java Province. The determination of the population is based on the consideration that junior high school students are in the early adolescence phase that experiences the development of self-identity as well as increased use of social media and interaction with peers. Based on data from the Basic Education Data (Dapodik), the total population of junior high school students in Central Java Province is 1,207,184 students. The number of samples was determined using the Slovin formula with an error rate of 5%. Based on the results of the calculation, a sample of 400 students was obtained.

The sampling technique uses purposive sampling, which is a technique of determining samples based on certain considerations or characteristics that are in accordance with the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2024). The research sample consisted of grade VIII students from SMP Negeri 3 Jekulo, SMP Negeri 3 Bae, SMP Negeri 1 Gembong, and SMP Negeri 1 Mayong. The selection of grade VIII students was based on the consideration that the age group was in the early teenage stage when they began to experience increased social media use activities and involvement in peer relationships.

Data collection was carried out using questionnaires and documentation. According to Sugiyono (2024), a questionnaire is a data collection technique that is carried out by providing a set of written statements to respondents to be answered. The research instrument used a Likert scale of four answer choices, namely Strongly Agree (SS), Agree (S), Disagree (TS), and Strongly Disagree (STS). The Likert scale is used to measure individual attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of a social phenomenon (Abdullah et al., 2022). Statements in instruments consist of favorable and unfavorable forms with scoring that is adjusted to the direction of the statement.

The research instruments are arranged based on the indicators of each variable. The instrument of intensity of social media use was compiled based on the aspects stated by Ajzen (2005), namely attention, appreciation, duration, and frequency. The intensity of social media use in this study describes the level of student involvement in using social media through activities, length of use, attention, and involvement in social media.

The peer response instruments were compiled based on the theory of Santrock (2016), House in Mz and Marhani (2020), and Febrianti et al. (2023). Peer response in this study is defined as a form of response, attention, support, acceptance, and influence given by peers to students. The aspects used include social interaction, emotional support, award support, information support, instrumental support, social acceptance, social network and togetherness, and social influence.

The narcissistic behavior instrument is compiled based on the concept of Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) developed by Raskin and Terry (1988) and described by Twenge and Campbell (2009). Narcissistic behavior in this study describes an individual's tendency to over-show themselves, need attention and recognition from others, and have an excessive positive view of themselves. Aspects of narcissistic behavior used include authority, self-sufficiency, superiority, exhibitionism, exploitativeness, vanity, entitlement, and lack of empathy. This concept is also strengthened by Vaknin (2007, in Saripah et al., 2023) and Lestari and Wulayani (2024) who describe the characteristics of narcissistic behavior in adolescents.

Documentation is used as research supporting data. Documentation is a data collection technique through various sources of information relevant to research, such as documents, archives, reports, and other supporting data (Marinu Waruwu, 2023). Documentation data was used to obtain information related to the location and subject of the study (Ibrahim et al., 2018).

Prior to the main data collection, the research instruments were pilot-tested on respondents with characteristics similar to those of the study sample but who were not included in the actual sample. The pilot test was conducted to assess the validity of each item and the reliability of the instruments using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Only instruments that met the validity and reliability criteria were used in the main study.

Data analysis was carried out using multiple linear regression with the help of a statistical program. Before hypothesis testing, validity tests, reliability tests, and analysis prerequisites tests were carried out. The validity test is used to determine the ability of the instrument to measure the research variable, while the reliability test is used to determine the consistency of the research instrument. The reliability test was carried out using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient with the instrument criterion being declared reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value was greater than 0.60.

The analysis prerequisite test includes the normality test, the multicollinearity test, and the heteroscedasticity test. The normality test was carried out to determine the distribution of research data, while the multicollinearity test was used to determine the relationship between independent variables. The heteroscedasticity test was carried out to determine the similarity of residual variance in the regression model (Sujarweni, 2023). Hypothesis testing was carried out through the t-test to determine the influence of the independent variable partially, the F test to determine the influence of the independent variable simultaneously, and the determination coefficient (R^2) to determine the contribution of the independent variable in explaining the bound variable.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was carried out on grade VIII students in four schools, namely SMP Negeri 3 Jekulo, SMP Negeri 3 Bae, SMP Negeri 1 Gembong, and SMP Negeri 1 Mayong. Data collection was carried out using research instruments in the form of questionnaires given to 400 students as respondents. The data obtained was used to measure three research variables, namely the intensity of social media use, peer response, and students' narcissistic behavior.

The distribution of respondents by school origin in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by school origin

Num	Schools	Number of Respondents
1	State Junior High School 3 Jekulo	125
2	State High School 1 May	145
3	SMP Negeri 1 Gembong	60
4	SMP Negeri 3 Bae	70
	Total	400

The research data was then analyzed using multiple linear regression to determine the influence of the intensity of social media use and peer responses on students' narcissistic behavior. Before hypothesis testing, an analysis prerequisite test was first carried out which included a normality test, a multicollinearity test, and a heteroscedasticity test. The test is carried out to ensure that the regression model used meets the assumptions of statistical analysis.

The results of the normality test using the *One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test* showed an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.064. This value is greater than the significance level of 0.05 so it can be concluded that the residual data of the research is normally distributed. The results of the multicollinearity test showed a *Tolerance* value on the variable intensity of social media use and peer response of 0.972 and a *Variance Inflation Factor* (VIF) value of 1.029. These values show that the regression model does not experience symptoms of multicollinearity. The heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser test showed a significance value of the social media use intensity variable of 0.098 and peer response of 0.665. Both values are greater than 0.05 so it can be concluded that the regression model does not experience heteroscedasticity. The results of the classical assumption test in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of the Classical Assumption Test of the Regression Model

Types of Testing	Indicator	Results	Remarks
Normality	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,064	Normally distributed data
Multicollinearity	Tolerance X1	0,972	Multicollinearity does not occur
Multicollinearity	Tolerance X2	0,972	Multicollinearity does not occur
Multicollinearity	VIF X1	1,029	Multicollinearity does not occur
Multicollinearity	VIF X2	1,029	Multicollinearity does not occur
Heteroscedasticity	Sig. X1	0,098	Heteroscedasticity does not occur
Heteroscedasticity	Sig. X2	0,665	Heteroscedasticity does not occur

Based on the results of the classical assumption test, the regression model has met the requirements of the analysis so that it can be used to test the influence of independent variables on dependent variables. Hypothesis testing was carried out using multiple linear regression analysis through partial tests (*t-test*) and simultaneous tests (*F-tests*). The t-test was used to determine the influence of each independent variable partially on students' narcissistic behavior. The results of multiple linear regression analysis in Table 3.

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Variables	Regression Coefficient (B)	t	Sig.	Remarks
Constant	37,025	14,690	0,000	-
Social Media Use Intensity (X1)	0,007	0,175	0,861	Insignificant
Peer Response (X2)	-0,103	-3,486	0,001	Significant

Based on Table 3, the variable of the intensity of social media use obtained a significance value of 0.861. This value is greater than 0.05, indicating that the intensity of social media use does not have a significant effect on students' narcissistic behavior. Thus, the first hypothesis that the intensity of social media use has an effect on students' narcissistic behavior is not proven. These results show that the high intensity of social media use does not directly cause an increase in narcissistic behavior in junior high school students in grade VIII. High social media usage does not necessarily indicate a need to gain attention, praise, or recognition from others. Social media can be used by students for various activities such as communication, entertainment, obtaining information, and supporting learning activities.

The peer response variable obtained a significance value of 0.001 which was smaller than 0.05. These results show that peer responses have a significant effect on students' narcissistic behavior. Thus, the second hypothesis that peer responses have an effect on students' narcissistic behavior is accepted. The findings suggest that the social environment has an important role in adolescent behavioral development. Responses of attention, acceptance, appreciation, and recognition from peers can be factors that reinforce certain behaviors that students display. In adolescence, the acceptance of peer groups becomes one of the important aspects as individuals begin to build their identity through social relationships.

Simultaneous hypothesis testing was carried out using the F test to determine the effect of the intensity of social media use and peer responses together on students' narcissistic behavior. The results of the F test in Table 4.

Table 4. Simultaneous Test Results (F Test)

Models	F	Sig.	Remarks
Multiple Linear Regression	6,162	0,002	Significant effect

Based on Table 4, a significance value of 0.002 was obtained which was smaller than 0.05. These results show that the intensity of social media use and peer responses together have a significant effect on students' narcissistic behavior. Thus, the third hypothesis that the intensity of social media use and peer responses simultaneously affect students' narcissistic behavior is accepted. The results of the regression analysis showed that the variable of the intensity of social media use had a positive influence direction, while the peer response had a negative influence on students' narcissistic behavior. The regression equations obtained are:

$$Y = 37.025 + 0.007X_1 - 0.103X_2 \quad (1)$$

The constant value of 37.025 indicates that if the variables of the intensity of social media use and peer response are considered fixed, then the value of the student's narcissistic behavior is at 37.025. The regression coefficient of social media use intensity of 0.007 showed that an increase in the intensity of social media use tended to increase narcissistic behavior, but this effect was not statistically significant. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient of peer response of -0.103 showed that the increase in peer response in this study was related to a decrease in students' narcissistic behavior. The amount of contribution of the free variable to students' narcissistic behavior is known through the value of the determination coefficient. The results of the determination coefficient analysis in Table 5.

Table 5. Result of Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
0,172	0,030	0,025	5,060

The *R Square* value of 0.030 indicates that the intensity of social media use and peer responses can explain the variation in students' narcissistic behavior by 3%. Meanwhile, 97% of the variation in narcissistic behavior was influenced by other factors outside the study. These results show that narcissistic behavior in adolescents is a complex behavior and is not only influenced by social media use factors and relationships with peers.

The relatively low coefficient of determination indicates that there are still various other factors that may influence narcissistic behavior in adolescents beyond the variables examined in this study. The development of narcissistic behavior is also influenced by family environmental factors, such as parenting styles, *parental overvaluation*, and *overprotection* (Schie et al., 2020). In addition to family factors, self-control and self-esteem are also associated with narcissistic tendencies (Laeli et al., 2018). Self-concept and peer conformity also contribute to narcissistic behavior among adolescents (Yoniar et al., 2024).

The results showed that the intensity of social media use did not have a significant effect on students' narcissistic behavior. These findings suggest that high frequency and duration use of social media is not necessarily associated with increased narcissistic behavior tendencies. The intensity of social media use in this study was measured through the aspects of attention, appreciation, duration, and frequency of use. The high activity of students in using social media does not necessarily indicate the need to gain attention or recognition from others. This condition can occur because social media has various functions in the lives of teenagers. Students can use social media as a means of communication, obtaining information, seeking entertainment, and supporting academic activities. Thus, the intensity of social media use does not automatically reflect the presence of self-image behaviors or the need for social validation that are characteristic of narcissistic behavior.

The results of this study are different from the research of Hariani, Saptaputra, and Wulandari (2024) which found a positive relationship between the intensity of social media use and narcissistic behavior in adolescents. The study explained that the higher the intensity of social media use, the higher the tendency for narcissistic behavior that individuals have. The difference in research results can be influenced by the characteristics of the respondents, the research

environment, and different patterns of social media use. The respondents in this study were junior high school students in grade VIII who were in their early teens, so the use of social media was likely to be used more for communication, entertainment, and information search than as a means of excessive self-expression. The findings of this study are also in line with the views of Engkus, Hikmat, and Karso Saminnurahmat (2017) who explain that narcissistic behavior in adolescents is a phenomenon that is influenced by various factors. Social media can be a means for individuals to present themselves, but it is not the only cause of the emergence of narcissistic behavior. Narcissistic behavior is related to an individual's need for recognition, attention, and social reward from the surrounding environment.

Peer response variables showed a significant influence on students' narcissistic behavior. These results show that the social environment has a role in shaping adolescent behavior. In adolescence, relationships with peers become one of the important aspects as individuals begin to reduce dependence on family and pay more attention to acceptance from their social group. Peer responses in this study included social interaction, emotional support, reward support, information support, instrumental support, social acceptance, social networking and togetherness, and social influence. The form of responses students receive from peers can influence the way an individual perceives himself or herself and determines the behavior displayed in a social environment.

The results of this study support the research of Setiyowati et al. (2023) which showed that peer conformity has a relationship with students' narcissistic behavior. Adolescents tend to adjust to their social groups in order to gain acceptance, including in how to present themselves and interact through social media. Social responses from peers can be a form of reinforcement that influences adolescent behavior. Research by Lestari and Wulayani (2024) also explains that individuals with narcissistic tendencies have a need for appreciation and recognition from others. These needs can be obtained through various forms of social responses provided by the surrounding environment. Therefore, the existence of peers is an important factor in understanding the development of narcissistic behavior in adolescents.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the intensity of social media use does not have a significant effect on narcissistic behavior among eighth-grade junior high school students, while peer responses have a significant effect. These findings indicate that narcissistic behavior is not only related to the intensity of social media use but also to other social and individual developmental factors. For guidance and counseling teachers, these findings highlight the importance of paying attention to the quality of students' peer relationships through services that support positive self-concept, social skills, healthy relationships, and the ability to cope with social pressure. This study has limitations because the model only explains 3% of the variation in narcissistic behavior, while 97% is influenced by other factors outside the study, and the sample was limited to four junior high schools in Central Java, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research is recommended to involve more diverse samples and include other variables, such as parenting styles, self-concept, self-control, and self-esteem..

ACKNOWLEDGE

The author expressed his gratitude to all parties who have provided support and assistance in the implementation of this research. Special thanks were conveyed to the school, namely SMP Negeri 3 Jekulo, SMP Negeri 3 Bae, SMP Negeri 1 Gembong, and SMP Negeri 1 Mayong who have given permission and assisted in the process of collecting research data. The author also expressed his gratitude to all grade VIII students who were willing to be respondents in this study. Appreciation and gratitude were also conveyed to the supervisor, family, and all parties who have provided direction, support, and motivation so that this research could be completed properly.

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