

Distortion of Quranic Interpretation on Social Media: An Analysis of the Spread of Misleading Meanings

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Abstract

The development of social media as a digital public space has had a major impact on the way Muslims access, understand and disseminate Quranic interpretation. However, this phenomenon has also created new problems in the form of distortion of the meaning of Quranic interpretations that are disseminated without adequate scientific basis. This article aims to critically analyze the widespread dissemination of misleading Quranic interpretations on social media, as well as identify the patterns of deviations that occur, the actors who spread them, and their impact on public understanding. The research method used is a qualitative approach based on literature study, observation of social media content (YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter/X), and critical discourse analysis. The results show that distortions of interpretations often appear in the form of verse fragments quoted without context, excessive symbolic interpretations, and obscuring the original meaning for certain ideological or political interests. The actors include non-authoritative figures who have great digital influence, such as influencers, motivators, and instant preachers who do not have a background in tafsir. The impact is quite serious, namely the emergence of misunderstanding of Islamic teachings, increasing polarization in society, and weakening the scientific authority of scholars and official tafsir institutions. This study recommends the importance of tafsir literacy among social media users and strengthening the role of Islamic institutions in educating the ummah so as not to be trapped in misleading religious narratives.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of social media has revolutionized various aspects of human life, including the way Muslims access and understand religious teachings. In this digital era, social media has become a vast public space, where religious information and knowledge can be accessed easily, quickly and without restrictions (Munjiat, 2020).

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However, behind this convenience, there are major challenges in maintaining the quality and authority of religious information disseminated on digital platforms (Gambo Danmuchikwali & Muhammad Suleiman, 2020). One significant impact is the proliferation of Quranic interpretations that are not based on valid scientific principles, and even tend to distort the original meaning of the Quranic text itself (Othman, 2024). This phenomenon raises new problems that require serious attention, both from Muslims and scholars and academics. The Quran as a source of revelation revealed by Allah SWT has a very high position in Islamic teachings (Ghani et al., 2024). As confirmed in the Quran surah Al-Isra' verse 9, Allah says which means:

"Verily, this Qur'an guides to a straighter path and gives glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds that for them is a great reward."

In this verse, Allah emphasizes that the Qur'ān is the straightest guidance, which provides the right direction for the life of mankind. Therefore, any attempt to understand and interpret the Quran must be done with great care and based on a valid methodology. The interpretation of the Quran, as explained in the science of Ulumul Quran, is not just a free interpretation, but an intellectual activity that must pay attention to the context of language, history, and the methodology of interpretation that has been agreed upon by the scholars. However, in today's digital era, various interpretations of Quranic verses are often disseminated through social media without regard to the applicable scientific principles. This distortion of the meaning of interpretation is often done by cutting verses, ignoring the historical context (asbabun nuzul), and interpreting the text literally without paying attention to the rules that exist in the science of interpretation (Badra & Shiri, 2021). This is certainly contrary to the principles affirmed by Allah in the Quran surah Al-Mulk verse 14 which means:

"He does not know (what is best) who created, but He is the Most Subtle, the Most Knowing."

This verse reminds Muslims that only Allah SWT knows the meaning of each of His revelations, and therefore, the interpretation of the Quran must be done with a deep understanding of the science of tafsir, as well as following in the footsteps of previous scholars who have authority in this field (Junaedi et al., 2025). In addition, the spread of unauthorized interpretations on social media is often caused by non-authoritative actors who do not have a scientific background in tafsir. In this context, many figures such as influencers, instant preachers, and motivators dominate the digital public space, and spread unverified interpretations. This happens even though the Prophet Muhammad SAW in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari emphasized that:

"Whoever speaks about the Quran based on his own opinion, and he is right, then he has erred." (HR. Bukhari)

This hadith indicates that interpretation of the Qur'ān should not be done based solely on personal opinion without reference to the valid science of interpretation. The dissemination of inaccurate interpretations by those who do not have sufficient background can lead to the spread of misunderstandings of Islamic teachings, and this is harmful to Muslims' understanding of the teachings of their

religion (Klaina, 2025). Not only that, in observing the dynamics of social media, we can also see that the spread of these unauthorized interpretations is often motivated by ideological, political, or even personal popularity. This phenomenon makes the interpretations spread on social media often lose their scientific context and prioritize the aspect of sensationalism (Othman, 2024). For example, interpretations that lead to extremist or radical views are often spread with the aim of attracting attention and gaining mass support, this risks creating polarization among Muslims, which in turn can worsen social and political relations. In the face of this phenomenon, it is important for Muslims to strengthen interpretive literacy, especially among social media users, so that they do not get caught up in misleading narratives (Febriani et al., 2024). As explained in the Quran surah Al-Zumar verse 9 which means:

“Say, are those who know equal to those who do not know?”

This verse reminds us that knowledge and correct understanding of religious teachings have a very important position (Lailatussa'idah, 2023). Therefore, to prevent distorted interpretations on social media, more systematic educational efforts based on valid science are needed, as well as strengthening the role of Islamic institutions in enlightening the people. This study aims to examine and analyze the spread of distorted interpretations on social media, as well as identify the pattern of these deviations, the actors who spread them, and their impact on the religious understanding of the ummah. The method used in this research is a qualitative approach with literature studies, observation of social media content such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter/X, and critical discourse analysis (Noermanzah et al., 2022). Thus, this research is expected to make an important contribution in strengthening interpretive literacy in the digital era and encouraging people to be more careful in filtering religious information on social media.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with the methods of literature study, observation of social media content, and critical discourse analysis (Noermanzah et al., 2022). This approach was chosen because it is able to explore the meaning in depth of the phenomenon of the spread of deviant interpretations of the Quran in the digital space. Literature studies were conducted to understand the basic principles of tafsir science, valid interpretation methodologies, and refer to authoritative works in the field of classical and contemporary tafsir. Observations were made on platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter/X to identify tafsir content that is not in accordance with scientific principles and potential deviations in the meaning of verses. The observed content was selected based on popularity, user interaction, and indications of theological deviation. Critical discourse analysis was used to dissect the ideological structure, rhetoric, and power relations contained in the dissemination of these interpretations, including the influence of non-authoritative figures in shaping public perception of the Quranic text. The data collected is analyzed descriptively by tracing the patterns of deviant interpretations, the characteristics of the disseminating actors, and their impact on people's understanding and religious practices. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the urgency of strengthening tafsir literacy and the importance of the role of ulama in maintaining the authenticity of the

Quranic meaning in the digital era.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study reveals some important findings related to the spread of deviant Quranic interpretations on social media, as well as their impact on Muslims' understanding. The results of the analysis of social media content covering platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter/X show that there are various patterns of deviation in the delivery of Quranic interpretations, which are often carried out by non-authoritative actors without sufficient scientific basis in the field of interpretation (Rif et al., 2023).

Deviations in the Transmission of Tafsir

The phenomenon of spreading unauthorized Quranic interpretations on social media does not occur in a vacuum. It is part of a larger dynamic of shifting religious authority from scholars and scholars to non-authoritative figures who have broad access to information technology (Hameed et al., 2023). In a fast-paced and instant digital space, the complexity of tafsir science is often marginalized by popular narratives that are easier to digest but shallow in substance. This is where the crucial problem lies: holy verses that should be understood with caution, established methodology, and in-depth knowledge, instead become opinion commodities that are freely interpreted by anyone (Arbie et al., 2023). This deviation of interpretation can be seen from several common patterns that are widely developed on various digital platforms. There are at least four forms of misinterpretation that are rampant and have a serious impact on the understanding and practice of Muslims.

First, the use of verse fragments without context.

One of the most obvious forms of deviation is the tendency to quote Quranic verses in fragments, without considering their historical, linguistic, or asbabun nuzul contexts (Badra & Shiri, 2021). This practice is particularly dangerous as it can turn the divine message into a justification for a particular ideology. For example, a quote from Surah Al-Anfal verse 60 which means:

“And prepare against them whatever force you can...” (QS. Al-Anfal: 60)

This verse is often used to justify aggressive or violent actions in today's socio-political context. In fact, according to classical mufasssirs such as Ibn Katsir and Al-Qurtubi, the verse is an order to prepare for defense in a very specific war context, namely when Muslims faced a real threat from the Makkah polytheists. This verse cannot be separated from the series of verses before and after it, which explain the ethics of war and its main purpose as self-defense, not aggression. Even in the verse that follows, Allah emphasizes the importance of preventing conflict:

“And if they incline to peace, then incline to it...” (QS. Al-Anfal: 61)

This shows that the context of the verse does not support the use of violence without cause, but rather calls for peace where possible (Nasywa Hilmi, 2023). In the science of tafsir, context (siyāq) and asbabun nuzul are two essential elements to understand the exact meaning of a verse. According to al-Zurqani in

Manāhil al-'Irfān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, without adequate knowledge of the causes of the revelation of a verse, it will be difficult for anyone to understand the substantial meaning of the verse. This is in line with the words of Allah, which means:

"It is He who revealed the Book (the Qur'ān) to you. Among them are the muhkamat verses... as for those whose hearts incline to misguidance, they follow the mutasyabihat verses to cause temptation..." (Sūrat Ali Imran: 7).

This verse warns about the dangers of taking a snippet of a verse without understanding its entirety and the deviant intentions in its interpretation. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) also said:

"Whoever speaks about the Quran based on his own opinion, even if he is right, then indeed he is wrong." (Tirmidhi no. 2952, hasan)

The misuse of verses due to lack of understanding of the context not only reflects intellectual carelessness, but also violates the principles of Islamic hermeneutics which demand scientific integrity in interpreting revelation (Aminullah Poya & Habiburrahman Rizapoor, 20).

Second, Excessive Symbolic Interpretation

Another deviation that has emerged is the tendency of some preachers, influencers, or popular figures to give symbolic interpretations of Quranic verses in an exaggerated, even speculative manner (Othman, 2024). These symbolic interpretations usually do not have a strong epistemological basis and are often intended to link the Qur'ān to contemporary narratives such as conspiracy theories, business motivations, and materialistic ideologies (Hameed et al., 2023). For example, verses that speak of worldly wealth or the enjoyment of worldly life are freely associated with the paradigm of capitalism or modern financial success, without regard to the boundaries of the original meaning of the verse in question. In fact, in the Islamic tafsir tradition, symbolic interpretation (ta'wil) has very strict rules. Scholars such as al-Ghazali and Fakhruddin al-Razi warned that ta'wil is only valid if it is based on valid qarinah (indication) from the nash (text) and supported by adequate tools, such as balaghah, nahwu, ushul fiqh, and asbabun nuzul. Tafsir bi al-ra'yi, or interpretation based on personal opinion without a strong basis, has even been criticized by the Prophet Muhammad in the hadith:

"Whoever speaks about the Quran based on his own opinion, even if he is right, then indeed he is wrong." (HR Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi)

The Quran itself warns that the meaning of mutasyabihat (ambiguous or multi-interpreted) verses is not to be distorted for the sake of a particular agenda:

"As for those whose hearts are inclined to misguidance, they follow the mutasyabihat verses to cause temptation and seek their interpretation, but no one knows their interpretation except Allah." (QS. Ali Imran: 7)

Allah also warns people against speaking in the name of Allah without knowledge:

"And do not say of that which your tongues falsely call: 'This is lawful and this is unlawful,' so as to invent a lie against Allah. Verily, those who invent lies against Allah will not prosper." (QS. An-Nahl: 116)

Thus, symbolic interpretations that are not based on scientific methodology risk turning the message of revelation into a kind of popular culture product that loses its theological and spiritual essence (Badra & Shiri, 2021). Therefore, it is important to limit interpretation to an accountable scientific framework in order to maintain the purity of the divine message.

Third, Impact of Misinterpretation on People's Understanding

The impact of the spread of this distorted interpretation is vast and serious. First, it can create a distortion of religious understanding that leads to acts of extremism, radicalism, and even terrorism (Khalil et al., 2022). History has recorded how Quranic verses that are narrowly understood, without context and scholarship, are used as justification for violence in the name of religion. This understanding is dangerous because it cuts across the dimensions of mercy and justice in the teachings of Islam. Allah SWT has affirmed that Islam is a religion that brings mercy to all of nature:

"And We have not sent you (Muhammad) but to be a mercy to all the worlds." (QS. Al-Anbiya: 107)

Second, the spread of these invalid interpretations has led to fragmentation and polarization among Muslims (Abdullah et al., 2024). Each group or individual feels that they have the most correct interpretation of the Quran, even though it is not based on scientific tafsir methodology. Many of these claims are actually flavored with political, economic and ideological interests, not sincerity in seeking the truth. This threatens ukhuwah Islamiyah, which is an important foundation in building a united Islamic society. Third, this deviation also causes epistemic unrest among ordinary people who do not have the scientific provision in understanding the Quran (Badra & Shiri, 2021). They have difficulty distinguishing between authoritative interpretations and speculative opinions wrapped in religious narratives and persuasive rhetoric. As a result, people are more easily influenced by figures who actually do not have scientific legitimacy, but have great reach through social media and other digital platforms. This phenomenon illustrates the emergence of pseudo-authorities, those who appear knowledgeable on the surface but actually do not understand the discipline of tafsir in depth. This contradicts the Islamic principle that requires us to ask the experts about things we do not know:

"So ask those who have knowledge if you do not know." (QS. An-Nahl: 43)

Allah SWT also warns against following something without valid knowledge:

"And do not follow anything about which you have no knowledge. Indeed, hearing, sight and heart will all be held accountable." (QS. Al-Isra': 36)

Therefore, it is important for Muslims to prioritize healthy, authoritative, and scientifically-based tafsir literacy so that they do not easily fall into deviations that can damage aqidah and ukhuwah.

Fourth, the Urgency of Reactualizing Scientific Authority in Tafsir

To deal with the rampant deviation in the interpretation of the Quran, it is very important to reactualize the role of scientific authority in the field of interpretation (Murshidi et al., 2024). Scholars, academics, and Islamic educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools and Islamic universities must take a strategic role in guiding people to understand the Quran correctly, methodologically, and contextually. The challenges of the digital era demand a new approach. Da'wah and tafsir education are no longer sufficient to be delivered conventionally, but must also penetrate digital platforms such as social media, podcasts, YouTube channels, and other online media. The goal is for scientific and authoritative narratives to compete with speculative and popular interpretations that spread quickly. It is also important to develop a strong Quranic literacy curriculum from primary to higher education. This curriculum not only teaches how to read the Quran, but also hones critical skills on the meaning of verses and the principles of tafsir. The introduction to the methods of tafsir bil ma'tsur (history-based), tafsir bi al-ra'yi (rational-based with scientific principles), as well as an understanding of the context of asbabun nuzul and the principles of Islamic hermeneutics are crucial. This task is in line with Allah's command to preserve knowledge and convey it correctly:

"Verily, those who fear Allah among His servants are only the scholars." (QS. Fathir: 28)

This verse shows that scientific authority has an important position in maintaining religious purity, because only people with knowledge have the capacity to understand and explain revelation correctly (Fuad et al., 2025). Therefore, the task of scholars and academics is not only to convey, but also to straighten out deviations that occur in society. Furthermore, Allah SWT also commands that knowledge be conveyed responsibly, and not hidden or allowed to be replaced by misleading opinions:

"Verily, those who conceal what We have revealed of information and guidance after We have explained it to mankind in the Book, they are cursed by Allah and cursed by all those who can curse." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 159)

Thus, the reactualization of scientific authority in tafsir is not only a scientific need, but also a religious responsibility. Only by strengthening the role of scientific institutions, expanding tafsir education based on valid methodology, and involving digital media productively, can the ummah be saved from the influence of deviant and misleading interpretations (Arbie et al., 2023). Deviations in the dissemination of Quranic interpretations on social media are a serious challenge to the sustainability of a valid and peaceful understanding of Islam. The dissemination of partial verses and symbolic interpretations without scientific basis has obscured the true meaning of revelation and created room for misguidance (Arbie et al., 2023). Therefore, strengthening scientific authority, tafsir education based on valid

methodology, and active efforts of scholars and academics in rectifying deviations are urgent needs in maintaining the purity and integrity of the Quranic message amid the swift flow of digital information.

The Impact of Spreading Misleading Tafsir

The spread of invalid or heretical interpretations has a huge impact on Muslims' understanding of the teachings of the Quran (Arbie et al., 2023). In this increasingly open and connected world, information about religion can be easily disseminated through various channels, including social media and online platforms. This gives room for interpretations that are not based on sound scientific methodology to flourish, which can ultimately lead to a corrupted understanding of Islamic teachings. The author will discuss some of the significant impacts of the spread of these misinterpretations.

First, Increasing Misunderstanding of Islamic Teachings

One of the most obvious impacts of the spread of misguided interpretations is the misunderstanding of the teachings of Islam, especially in terms of the basic principles that every Muslim should correctly understand (Mounadil, 2023). For example, interpretations that ignore the historical and cultural context can obscure the original meaning of Quranic verses, which in turn leads to misunderstandings and actions that are incompatible with the true teachings of Islam. Misunderstanding Quranic verses can lead to unauthorized worship practices or even deviations from the core values of Islam (Bukhari Muslim et al., 2024). An example of this is how some who quote Quranic verses on war and violence without proper context, may misuse the verses to support acts of violence. In fact, in the original context, the verses relate to wars that took place during the time of the Prophet Muhammad to defend himself from enemy attacks and not to attack without reason.

“And fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not exceed the limits; surely Allah does not like those who exceed the limits.” (QS. Al-Baqarah: 190)

Inadequate interpretation of these verses can create misunderstandings that lead to misuse of religious teachings (Munir et al., 2025).

Second, it exacerbates polarization and conflict within the Muslim Ummah

Another major impact is the sharpening polarization among Muslims (Abdullah et al., 2024). When unauthorized interpretations are disseminated, especially by figures who are not competent or do not have clear scientific authority, differences of opinion between groups within Muslims can grow. Some groups may use invalid interpretations to support extreme, radical or even terrorist ideologies that contradict the moderate and merciful teachings of Islam (Khalil et al., 2022). This phenomenon often occurs in religious debates on social media, where each group claims the truth based on their own interpretations, regardless of legitimate scientific authority. This polarization not only damages inter-group relations within Muslims, but also damages social harmony more broadly, including at the state level.

“And if two groups of believers fight, then reconcile between them. If one of them transgresses against the other, then fight the transgressor until he returns to the commandments of

Allah." (QS. Al-Hujurat: 9)

Invalid interpretations can encourage actions that are not in line with the spirit of peace and unity taught in the Quran, even causing greater harm (Arbie et al., 2023).

Third, Undermining the Scholarly Authority of Scholars and Official Tafsir Institutions

The spread of invalid tafsir also has the potential to weaken the authority of scholars and official tafsir institutions that have been the guardians of science and the authenticity of Islamic teachings (Fuad et al., 2025). Scholars who have a clear scientific sanad and strong scientific authority are often ignored or even scorned by some people who prefer tafsir that is not valid or only based on personal opinion. This reduces the ability of Muslims to obtain correct and valid religious knowledge, and makes people more easily influenced by figures who do not have sufficient knowledge. In this context, social media is often a tool that makes matters worse, as these platforms allow for the unlimited dissemination of information that is more often than not accessed by the Ummah without proper scientific filters.

"And when news about security or fear comes to them, they immediately spread it. But if they had submitted it to the Messenger and the Ulil Amri among them, those who wish to know the truth would have been able to find out from them." (QS. An-Nisa: 83)

This verse shows the importance of the role of scientific authority in maintaining the quality of information and religious teachings that people receive (Fadillah et al., 2023). The spread of unauthorized tafsir can undermine this role, as scholars and official tafsir institutions often find it more difficult to compete with the popularity of figures who lack scientific authority.

Fourth, Social Deterioration and Loss of Public Order

In addition to intellectual and religious repercussions, the spread of misguided interpretations can also cause social damage and disrupt public order. When erroneous interpretations are used to justify wrong actions, such as violence or intolerance, then Muslims who follow such teachings can be trapped in actions that harm themselves and others. The resulting divisions within communities can undermine social stability and create insecurity. For example, historically, the spread of interpretations that jihad can be carried out in the form of violence to uphold religion out of context has led to acts of terrorism that destroy many lives. In fact, the concept of jihad in Islam refers to the struggle to uphold goodness and justice, both within oneself and society.

"And fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not exceed the limits." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 190)

People who do not understand tafsir correctly can be trapped in misperceptions of the teachings of Islam which are actually peaceful and compassionate (Khalil et al., 2022). The spread of tafsir that is not valid has the potential to cause great damage in terms of religious understanding, social, and scientific authority. Therefore, Muslims are in dire need of valid tafsir guidance that

adheres to the correct scientific methodology, so as not to be trapped in misunderstandings and deviations that can damage the unity of the ummah and social harmony. The existence of competent scholars, as well as educational institutions that teach the principles of correct tafsir, is essential to maintain the purity of the teachings of the Quran.

Actors spreading misleading interpretations

The spread of misleading interpretations on social media has become one of the major challenges in the effort to maintain the purity of Islamic teachings. Most of the actors involved in spreading these misleading interpretations are individuals who do not have sufficient scientific backgrounds in tafsir or Ulumul Quran. Although they do not have formal education in these disciplines, they can easily access social media platforms and have great influence over thousands, even millions of followers. This phenomenon is not only detrimental to Muslims' understanding of religious teachings, but also exacerbates the damage in the world of Islamic religious education (Murshidi et al., 2024). The author will discuss some of the significant impacts of these actors spreading misleading interpretations.

First, Individuals with Weak Scientific Backgrounds

The majority of actors spreading misleading interpretations are individuals who do not have formal education in tafsir or Ulumul Quran (Fadillah et al., 2023). They often come from among influencers, instant preachers, motivators, and even some ustadz who, although utilizing religious titles, do not have sufficient scientific educational basis in the field of tafsir (Rif et al., 2023). They tend to speak based on personal opinions, often without referring to valid scientific sources. This phenomenon is very dangerous because such people can easily influence the wider community, especially those who lack in-depth religious knowledge. Their followers are often unable to distinguish between valid and heretical interpretations, as they are more influenced by personal appeal or persuasive delivery. In this context, the ability to distinguish between valid and invalid interpretations becomes very important, and this can only be acquired by deep scientific understanding, not by listening to lectures with no clear basis.

"Say, 'This is my way, and I and those who follow me call to Allah with a clear proof.'"
(QS. Yusuf: 108)

This verse shows that true da'wah must be based on clear proofs, not just unsubstantiated opinions or interpretations. Preachers who do not have a valid scientific background run the risk of leading people down the wrong path.

Second, Popularity and Personal Gain Motives

The motive behind the spread of unauthorized interpretations is often the desire for popularity or personal gain. In the world of social media, any content that can attract attention, especially those that are controversial or sensational, will get more interaction, whether in the form of likes, comments, or shares. In many cases, actors spreading distorted interpretations take advantage of this potential to increase their number of followers, which in turn increases popularity and personal income. The nature of social media, which encourages users to interact with content that invokes emotions such as anger, surprise or fear, means that controversial

interpretations often receive more attention than valid, science-based interpretations. Content that can elicit a quick reaction from the audience spreads more easily, without considering its veracity. This is also exacerbated by social media algorithms that increasingly prioritize sensational content.

"Verily, those who conceal what We have revealed of information and guidance after We have explained it to mankind in the Book, they are those whom Allah has cursed and all creation has cursed." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 159)

This verse reminds us of the danger of hiding the truth or conveying something that is not in accordance with the facts and clear guidance. Spreading misleading interpretations is often done for specific purposes, such as personal gain or popularity, without regard to the negative consequences for Muslims.

Third, the Influence of Social Media and Content Dissemination Algorithms

Social media plays a huge role in spreading misleading interpretations. Platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter allow anyone to spread their opinions, regardless of the credibility of their sources or scientific authority. Unlike conventional media, which has stricter verification standards, social media often provides unlimited freedom in terms of disseminating information, both true and false. Social media algorithms tend to prioritize content that can trigger emotions or create debate. Content that is sensationalized or conflicted is more likely to get more interactions, allowing the spread of invalid interpretations to be wider and faster. This spread can reach people who are not knowledgeable enough to verify the truth. This leads to an increase in misunderstandings among the common people, who do not have in-depth knowledge of valid interpretations, and thus are easily trapped into wrong opinions.

"And do not follow what you have no knowledge of. Indeed, hearing, sight and conscience will all be held accountable." (QS. Al-Isra: 36)

Fourth, The Negative Impact of Spreading Misleading Interpretations

The impact of the spread of misleading interpretations by actors who do not have scientific authority is damage to religious understanding and even social damage. Muslims may fall into misunderstandings that lead to practices that are contrary to the true teachings of Islam, such as extreme actions, radicalism, or intolerance (Khalil et al., 2022). The spread of misguided interpretations can also lead to divisions within Muslims, which can worsen social and political conditions, especially in the context of countries with large Muslim populations (Alziady, 2021). In addition, the spread of false interpretations can exacerbate intellectual alienation among Muslims, where they prefer to follow people who are popular on social media rather than referring to scholars or tafsir institutions that have a clear scientific sanad. The spread of misleading tafsir on social media is caused by actors who do not have sufficient scientific background in the field of tafsir, but utilize popularity and personal gain. Social media, with algorithms that favor sensational content, exacerbates this phenomenon by spreading false interpretations faster than valid ones. Therefore, it is very important for Muslims to be more careful in choosing sources of religious information and entrust tafsir to scholars who have clear scientific authority, so as not to fall into harmful misunderstandings.

Recommendations and Implications

The spread of distorted interpretations on social media is a serious problem in today's Muslim society. This phenomenon can mislead Muslims in understanding the true teachings of the Quran, so efforts are needed to overcome and control the spread of unauthorized interpretations. Based on the findings of this study, there are several steps that can be taken to overcome this problem, which include increasing tafsir literacy, the active role of Islamic institutions and higher education, and strengthening the role of ulama and official tafsir institutions. The following are recommendations and implications of the findings:

First, Improving Interpretive Literacy among Social Media Users

One of the first steps that must be taken is to improve interpretation literacy among the public, especially social media users (Febriani et al., 2024). Low interpretive literacy makes many people easily influenced by the spread of unauthorized interpretations. In this fast-paced digital era, a lot of religious information is spread so quickly, without any clear filtering or verification. Therefore, it is important for every individual to have the critical ability to filter the information they receive, especially information related to religion. Tafsir literacy education programs need to be organized massively through various channels, such as social media, television, and radio, as well as through seminars or courses that are easily accessible to the wider community. This tafsir literacy education will not only help people to be wiser in choosing information, but also increase their understanding of the importance of referring to valid tafsir and scientific methodology in understanding Quranic verses (Lailatussa'idah, 2023).

In addition, tafsir literacy should include basic knowledge of valid tafsir methods, such as tafsir bil ma'tsur, which refers to the interpretation of the Quran using valid traditions and the interpretation of the companions, and tafsir bi al-ra'yi, which prioritizes interpretation based on personal ijtihad while adhering to scientific principles that have been accepted by scholars. With this understanding, people can more easily distinguish between valid and invalid interpretations.

“And We have revealed to you the Quran with the truth, that it may confirm the previous scriptures, and that you may explain to mankind what has been revealed to them.” (QS. An-Nisa: 105)

This verse confirms that the main purpose of the Qur'ān is to provide truth and clear explanations for mankind. Therefore, literacy in correct interpretation is essential for people to understand the Qur'ān correctly.

Second, the Active Role of Islamic Institutions and Higher Education

Islamic institutions and Islamic higher education need to be more active in educating the public about the basic principles of valid tafsir. This involves the important role of Islamic universities in developing a more comprehensive curriculum on tafsir and Ulumul Quran. By providing adequate education for students and the general public, these institutions will be able to produce a generation that is better informed and trained in understanding Quranic texts with proper methodology. Islamic educational institutions can also organize tafsir seminars and workshops that teach the correct ways of interpreting the Quran, as

well as provide space for students to learn directly from scholars or tafsir experts. Islamic higher education can also be a research medium for academics to study tafsir with a new perspective in accordance with the times without setting aside established scientific principles. In addition, Islamic universities should develop training programs for preachers or ustadz at the local level who have great influence in the community. Through this training, preachers can be given a deeper understanding of tafsir and taught to deliver da'wah with a sense of scientific responsibility.

“Verily, those who fear Allah among His servants are the scholars.” (QS. Fatir: 28)

This verse indicates that scholars, who possess knowledge and piety, are the most entitled to lead the people in understanding the Quran. Therefore, proper education in the science of tafsir will create scholars who are able to provide valid interpretations to the people.

Third, Strengthening the Role of Ulama and Official Tafsir Institutions

Furthermore, it is important to strengthen the role of scholars and official interpretation institutions in guarding Muslims' understanding of the Quran (Fadillah et al., 2023). Ulama have clear scientific authority and valid sanad in the field of tafsir, and they are the ones who should be the main reference in providing tafsir to Muslims. However, currently the role of scholars in providing valid interpretations is often marginalized by interpretations popularized by individuals who do not have a clear scientific basis (Hameed et al., 2023). For this reason, scholars and official tafsir institutions must be more active and open in providing interpretations that are in accordance with scientific and contextual rules, but still adhere to the basic principles of the Quran and Sunnah. Ulama need to be present in the digital space, either through social media platforms or other channels that can reach more people. Explanations based on valid knowledge must be delivered regularly and not just repeated in certain places, but must be accessible to all. In addition, official tafsir institutions such as the Institute for the Study of the Quran (LPI) or the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) need to strengthen their credibility in providing tafsir in a way that is clear and easily understood by the general public. Strengthening this authority will help make it easier for people to trust valid interpretations and avoid the spread of invalid interpretations.

“And do not follow what you have no knowledge of.” (QS. Al-Isra: 36)

This verse reminds Muslims not to follow opinions or interpretations that are not based on valid knowledge (Andhim et al., 2024). Therefore, the scientific authority of scholars and official interpretation institutions is indispensable in providing a correct understanding of the Quran.

Fourth, Implications for the Understanding of Muslims

With the implementation of the above recommendations, it is hoped that the Islamic community can be better protected from the spread of deviant interpretations and be in the correct understanding of the teachings of the Quran. Better tafsir literacy will create a religiously intelligent society, which is able to distinguish which interpretations are valid and which are heretical (Dwi Noviani et

al., 2024). This will also reduce polarization caused by false interpretations, and strengthen social harmony among Muslims. Overall, strengthening scientific authority and increasing tafsir literacy will have a positive impact on a better understanding of religion among Muslims, as well as improving the quality of da'wah based on correct knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The spread of unauthorized interpretations through social media has had a significant impact on Muslims' understanding of the Quranic teachings. In this article, it has been explained that this phenomenon is caused by a number of factors, including low tafsir literacy among the public, the role of actors spreading tafsir who do not have adequate scientific backgrounds, and the influence of social media algorithms that prioritize sensational content. The impact of this misinterpretation is far-reaching, ranging from misunderstanding the basic principles of Islamic teachings to polarization within the Muslim community that can damage social harmony. Through this analysis, it is suggested that to overcome the problem, strategic measures involving various parties are needed, such as increasing tafsir literacy among the public, strengthening the role of scholars and official tafsir institutions, as well as more active Islamic higher education institutions in organizing education and training on the basic principles of valid tafsir. High tafsir literacy is expected to equip Muslims with the ability to identify correct interpretations and distinguish them from those that are not valid, and reduce dependence on interpretations that are not based on established scientific principles. In addition, strengthening the role of scholars who have clear and trusted scientific authority is very important to maintain the purity of understanding of the Quran among Muslims. Through cooperation between Islamic institutions, higher education, and scholars, it is hoped that Muslims can avoid the spread of deviant interpretations and remain in the correct understanding of the teachings of the Quran. Thus, Muslims can strengthen their religious foundation and maintain harmony in social life and avoid the negative impact of misunderstanding the Quran.

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Author Contribution

Essalihin Khalid & Dasrizal: Improve Language, Conceptualization, Improve Content, **Khairul Fadli Rambe:** Visualization, Investigation, **Ceria Dewi Sihombing:** Data accuracy, Writing-Preparation of original manuscript, **Dinda Ardiyani Safitri:** Methodology.

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Ethical Clearance

The place or location studied has agreed to conduct research and is willing if the results of this study are published.

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