

Effectiveness of Self-Management Techniques Based on Islamic Counselling in Reducing Social Media Addiction Among Students

Maya Chofifah Silalahi¹, Ira Suryani²

^{1,2}State Islamic University of North Sumatra, Medan, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of Islamic guidance services incorporating self-management techniques in reducing the level of social media addiction among students at Al-Ulum High School in Medan. The background of the research stems from the increasing addictive behaviour towards social media among adolescents, which negatively impacts academic, social, and spiritual aspects. An Islamic approach is applied because it emphasises self-awareness, behavioural control, and the implementation of moral and spiritual principles, such as muhasabah (self-reflection), istiqamah (consistency), and murāqabah (self-monitoring). The research method employs a quantitative approach, utilising a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design. The research sample consists of 19 tenth-grade students selected purposively because they exhibited symptoms of social media addiction. Data were collected through a social media addiction questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.786). Data analysis was conducted using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test with a significance level of 0.05. The results showed a significant decrease in students' social media addiction levels, with the average score dropping from 77.9 (high category) to 57.6 (low to moderate category), and a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. These findings demonstrate that Islamic counselling services using self-management techniques are effective in enhancing self-regulation and reducing addictive behaviour towards social media.

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Corresponding Author:

Maya Chofifah Silalahi

Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, State Islamic University of North Sumatra, Indonesia

Email: maya303213136@uinsu.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology in the current digital era has a significant impact on adolescents' lives, particularly in the use of social media. Social media has become an integral part of daily life, facilitating communication, obtaining information, and expressing oneself [1]. However, uncontrolled use of social media can

develop into addictive behaviour that disrupts the balance of adolescents' lives, including academic achievement, social interactions, and mental health.

The phenomenon of social media addiction among high school students is an increasingly growing problem. Students who spend a significant amount of time on social media tend to experience concentration problems, decreased learning motivation, and changes in their social behaviour. According to research conducted by Yulianti and Prasetyo, excessive use of social media can trigger stress, anxiety, and social isolation in teenagers [2]. This condition requires effective interventions to help adolescents manage their time and behaviour more productively.

One approach that can be used to address social media addiction is a self-management technique based on Islamic counselling. This approach emphasises the development of self-awareness, behaviour control, and the application of Islamic values in daily life [3]. Islamic counselling draws on the principles of Islamic teachings, including patience, discipline, responsibility, and self-reflection, to foster healthy and balanced adolescent behaviour [4]. Thus, Islamic counselling-based self-management techniques not only aim to reduce addictive behaviours but also to cultivate character and spiritual independence in adolescents.

From an Islamic perspective, excessive use of social media is considered an act that should be avoided. Allah SWT says in Surah Al-Maidah verse 87: It means, "O you who have believed! Do not prohibit the good things which Allah has made lawful for you, and do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like those who transgress." (Al-Maidah: 87)

This verse emphasises that the use of social media should be within reasonable limits and should not cause harm to oneself or others. Everything good, including technology and social media, is allowed, but its use must be proportional in order to avoid personal or social harm.

A similar message is also reflected in Surah Al-A'raf, verse 31: Meaning 'O children of Adam! Wear your clothing at every place of worship, and eat and drink, but do not be excessive in your consumption. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are excessive.'

This verse emphasises the principle of moderation in all aspects of life, including the use of social media, so that teenagers are expected to use technology wisely and in a balanced manner.

Initial observations indicate that several students show signs of social media addiction, including using social media during study hours, sleep disturbances, and decreased social interaction in the school environment. This highlights the need for a systematic, practical, and relevant intervention program that aligns with the religious values held by the students. The use of self-management techniques based on Islamic counselling is expected to be an effective solution to reduce social media addiction while simultaneously enhancing students' spiritual awareness and self-control.

Various previous studies have attempted to address the issue of low self-acceptance in teenagers from broken homes through various counselling approaches. Research conducted by Nurhayati and Anggraini, which utilised cognitive-behavioural-based group counselling, has proven effective in helping students change negative thought patterns about themselves [5]. Meanwhile, Latif and Rahman applied reality counselling to strengthen

students' sense of responsibility and self-control. However, both approaches tend to emphasise cognitive restructuring and insight provision, while the aspects of emotional catharsis and deep expression of students' feelings have not been optimally facilitated [6]. In the context of teenagers from broken homes who bear heavy emotional burdens, the need to channel feelings through expressive media becomes important in the process of recovery and self-acceptance.

One potentially effective method in this context is Expressive Writing Therapy (EWT), which involves freely writing about significant emotional experiences. Siregar & Putri state that expressive writing can help individuals organise traumatic experiences, release inner tension, and enhance self-understanding and self-acceptance [7]. International research conducted by Umairah also shows that EWT can significantly improve psychological health and self-acceptance [8]. However, the implementation of expressive writing therapy in the educational context in Indonesia, particularly in religiously oriented madrasahs, remains very limited. Research that combines expressive writing therapy with group counselling services in Islamic-based educational institutions is almost nonexistent.

This gap suggests that existing research has not yet adequately addressed the integrative needs between emotional, social, and spiritual aspects in the process of adolescent self-acceptance. Therefore, this study proposes a new intervention model that combines the strengths of group guidance dynamics, such as empathy, social support, and shared reflection, with expressive writing therapy as a means of emotional catharsis and self-meaning reconstruction. This approach is expected to help adolescents from broken home families not only understand their feelings but also accept their own and their family's conditions more positively.

From the perspective of novelty, this research provides significant contributions both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study aims to integrate group guidance approaches with expressive writing therapy in the context of Islamic education at madrasah aliyah, an area that has not been extensively studied in Indonesia. This integration also adds a religious dimension by instilling the values of self-reflection (*muhasabah*), gratitude, and reliance on God (*tawakal*) in the reflective writing process, making the therapy more spiritually meaningful. Practically, this study offers an alternative guidance method for school counsellors in assisting students from broken homes who are experiencing self-acceptance crises. This approach can serve as an innovative strategy to create a counselling process that is more humanistic, reflective, and aligned with the religious values of students in madrasah.

Thus, this study not only contributes to the expansion of understanding the effectiveness of Group Guidance with Expressive Writing Therapy but also offers an innovative counselling service model relevant to the social and spiritual context of madrasah students in Indonesia. This research is expected to serve as an initial step in developing more empathetic, expressive, and value-based counselling practices, particularly to help students from broken homes achieve a more complete and meaningful self-acceptance.

2. METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental research design to determine the effectiveness of self-management techniques in Islamic guidance and counselling services in reducing social media addiction among students. The design used is the One Group Pretest-Posttest Design, in which subjects are given a pretest before the treatment and a posttest after the treatment to identify significant changes [9]. However, this design has limitations in controlling external variables because it does not involve a control group, so the internal validity of the study needs to be considered. The research design scheme is illustrated as follows:

$$O_1 - X - O_2$$

Description:

O_1 = Pretest (measurement before treatment)

X = Treatment (group counselling services using self-management techniques)

O_2 = Posttest (measurement after treatment)

The population of this study consists of all students in Class X-4 at High School Al-Ulum Medan, totalling 30 students. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, a method that involves the selection of participants based on specific criteria. The research subjects were students who showed signs of social media addiction, such as frequently using their phones during lessons or experiencing decreased concentration while studying. Based on the questionnaire results, 19 students were selected as the research sample. Although the sample size is relatively small, it is still acceptable for exploratory experimental research; however, the limitation of generalising the findings needs to be considered [10].

Data collection techniques include questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. The main instrument is a social media addiction questionnaire developed based on Al-Manayes' theory, covering three main aspects: social consequences, time displacement, and compulsive symptoms [11]. The questionnaire uses a Likert scale with five response options: always, often, sometimes, rarely, and never. The validity of the instrument was tested through item-total correlation analysis to determine which statement items are valid or invalid. Additionally, the instrument's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to evaluate its internal consistency. All instrument testing procedures are presented in a separate subsection titled "Instrument Development and Validation" to make it more systematic.

After the pretest, students received Islamic group guidance services using self-management techniques in four sessions. Each session lasted 45–60 minutes and included the following main activities: Presentation of material on self-management and the impact of social media addiction. Group discussions to identify unhealthy social media usage habits. Self-management practice exercises, including time management planning and self-control strategies. Reflection and sharing of individual experiences related to behaviour changes during practice.

This study considers ethical aspects by obtaining written consent (informed consent) from participants and maintaining the confidentiality of students' personal data [12]. All participants were provided with an explanation of the research objectives, procedures, their

right to withdraw, and the anonymous use of their data. Following the intervention, a post-test was conducted to assess behavioural changes. The data were analysed using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test due to the small sample size and ordinal data scale. Before analysis, a normality test was performed to ensure the appropriateness of non-parametric testing. The significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$ (95% confidence interval). An Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value < 0.05 indicates a significant difference between pretest and posttest results, signifying the effectiveness of Islamic counselling services using self-management techniques in reducing social media addiction among students [13].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Test of Instrument Validity and Reliability

The research instrument used to measure social media addiction behaviour was developed in the form of a questionnaire consisting of 30 statement items. Before being applied in the main study, the instrument was pilot-tested on 30 students to examine its validity and reliability. The validity test was conducted using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis with a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$). Based on the sample size ($n = 30$), the *r*-table value was determined to be 0.361. An item was considered valid if the calculated *r*-value (*r*-count) was greater than the *r*-table value. The results of the analysis indicated that out of the 30 statement items, 20 items met the validity criteria, while 10 items were declared invalid because their *r*-count values were below 0.361. Therefore, only the 20 valid items were used for data collection in the main study. The following table presents the results of the validity test, including the *r*-count values for each item:

Table 1. Results of the Validity Test of the Social Media Addiction Behaviour Instrument

No.	r-count	Description	No.	r-count	Description
1	0.055	Invalid	16	0.302	Invalid
2	-0.064	Invalid	17	0.189	Invalid
3	-0.042	Invalid	18	0.573	Valid
4	0.122	Invalid	19	0.531	Valid
5	0.368	Valid	20	0.488	Valid
6	0.467	Valid	21	0.423	Valid
7	0.533	Valid	22	0.066	Invalid
8	0.238	Invalid	23	0.411	Valid
9	0.690	Valid	24	0.404	Valid
10	0.544	Valid	25	0.153	Invalid
11	0.387	Valid	26	0.420	Valid
12	0.684	Valid	27	0.382	Valid
13	0.605	Valid	28	0.505	Valid
14	0.145	Invalid	29	0.540	Valid
15	0.482	Valid	30	0.436	Valid

After the validity test was conducted, a reliability test was performed to assess the consistency of the measuring instrument. The reliability test was carried out using the Cronbach's Alpha formula. The calculation results showed that the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.786, indicating that the instrument has high reliability. This means that the instrument is reliable and can be trusted for use in research. The following table presents the results of the instrument reliability test, which includes each item:

Table 2. Results of the Instrument Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.786	30

Based on the results of the validity and reliability tests, it can be concluded that the questionnaire instrument used in the research has adequate validity and high reliability, making it suitable for measuring social media addiction behaviour among students at Al-Ulum High School in Medan.

3.1.2. Description of Pretest and Posttest Data

To identify students who are considered to have a high level of social media addiction, an initial measurement (pretest) was conducted by administering a questionnaire to all 30 students of class X-4 at SMA Al-Ulum Medan. Based on the results of the questionnaire, 19 students showed social media addiction scores in the high category and were designated as research subjects. Description of Social Media Addiction Score Categories.

Low	: 20–47
Medium	: 48–74
High	: 75–100

The following Table 3 presents a summary of the pretest results based on those category intervals.

Table 3. Summary of Pretest Results of Social Media Addiction Scale

Category	Score Range	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
High	75–100	19 students	100%
Moderate	48–74	0 students	0%
Low	20–47	0 students	0%

Based on the pretest results, all participants were in the high category with score percentages ranging from 75% to 90%, indicating a very significant level of social media addiction. These findings suggest that before receiving any intervention, the students had a high tendency toward excessive social media use, which is closely associated with low self-control abilities.

3.1.3. Post-test Results of Social Media Addiction Scale

Following an intervention in the form of Islamic guidance services utilising self-management techniques over four sessions, a post-test was conducted using the same instrument to assess changes in student behaviour.

Table 4. Summary of Post-test Results of Social Media Addiction Scale

Category	Score Range	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
High	75–100	0 students	0%
Moderate	48–74	3 students	15,8%
Low	20–47	16 students	84,2%

Based on the results of the post-test, there was a significant decrease in students' social media addiction levels. The majority (84.2%) of students moved to the low category, while the remaining 15.8% were in the moderate category. The total score range decreased from 75–90 in the pretest to 52–74 in the post-test, indicating an average reduction of approximately 20–25 points on the social media addiction scale. This score decrease indicates that Islamic guidance services using self-management techniques are effective in helping students control their social media usage behaviour. For example, on average, students' social media addiction scores dropped from 77.9 (high category) to 57.6 (low–moderate category) after the intervention. Overall, these results reinforce that the application of self-management techniques in the context of Islamic guidance can be an effective strategy to reduce social media addiction while simultaneously enhancing students' self-regulation abilities.

3.1.4. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test Analysis

To determine the effectiveness of the intervention on students' social media addiction levels, the researcher conducted several statistical analyses, including the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test using IBM SPSS Statistics 23, to identify significant differences before and after the implementation of Islamic counselling with the self-management technique.

Table 5. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test

		Ranks		
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
posttest - pretest	Negative Ranks	19 ^a	10,00	190,00
	Positive Ranks	0 ^b	0,00	0,00
	Ties	0 ^c		
	Total	19		

a. posttest < pretest

b. posttest > pretest

c. posttest = pretest

Test Statistics^a

		posttest – pretest
Z		-3.839 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on positive ranks.

The results of the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test indicate that all participants (N = 19) experienced a decrease in scores from the pretest to the posttest, as evidenced by the number of negative ranks (19) and the absence of positive ranks (0). There were no ties between pretest and post-test scores (ties = 0), which indicates that all respondents demonstrated positive changes after the intervention. The obtained Z value was -3.839, and the significance value (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) was $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating a statistically significant difference between pretest and post-test scores. Thus, it can be concluded that the treatment or intervention provided in this study successfully reduced students' levels of social media addiction.

The test results showed that all participants (N = 19) experienced a decrease in scores from the pretest to the post-test, indicated by 19 negative ranks and no positive ranks. The significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ indicates a significant difference between pretest and post-test scores. Thus, it can be concluded that Islamic guidance services using self-management techniques are effective in reducing students' social media addiction levels. The decrease in scores not only reflects quantitative improvement but also indicates positive qualitative development in students' personality, diligence, and self-control abilities.

3.1.5. Comparison of Average Scores

Table 6 presents a comparison of the results of measuring students' social media addiction levels at the pretest and post-test stages after receiving Islamic counselling services with self-management techniques. Based on the table, the average (mean) social media addiction score decreased significantly from 77.9 at the pretest stage to 57.6 at the post-test stage. The median also showed a decrease from 77 to 56, indicating that most students experienced a shift in their addiction level to a lower category.

Table 6. Comparison of Average Pretest and Post-test Scores of Social Media Addiction

Stage	Mean	Median	SD
Pretest	77.9	77	4.2
Post-test	57.6	56	6.1

In addition, the standard deviation (SD) increased from 4.2 in the pretest to 6.1 in the post-test. This indicates a greater variation in scores among students after the intervention, which can be interpreted to mean that the level of success in self-control varies among individuals. Overall, these results reinforce the finding that Islamic guidance services incorporating self-management techniques are effective in reducing social media addiction and enhancing students' self-regulation skills at Al-Ulum High School in Medan.

The following bar chart displays a comparison of the average social media addiction scores of students before and after being provided with Islamic guidance services using self-management techniques. It is clearly visible that there is a significant decrease in scores from an average of 77.9 (high category) in the pretest to 57.6 (low–medium category) in the post-test, confirming the effectiveness of the intervention in reducing social media addiction behaviours.

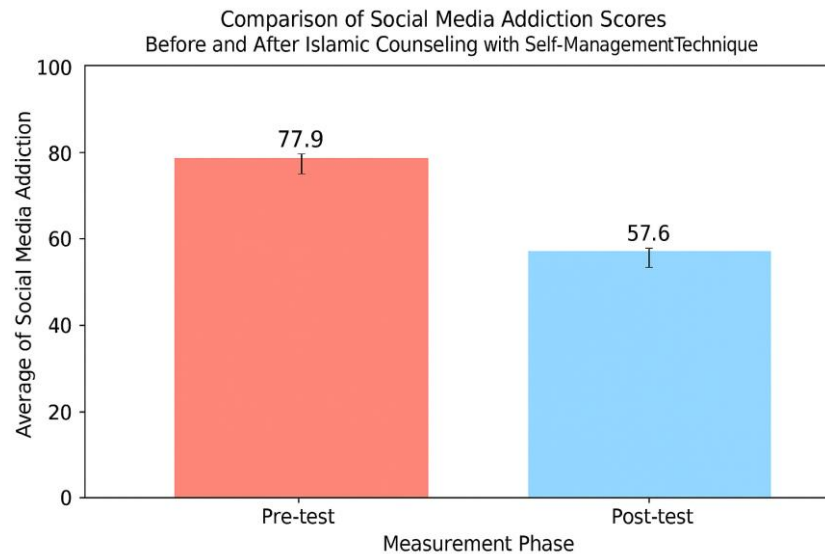


Figure 1. Comparison of Average Scores, Median, and Standard Deviation of Students' Social Media Addiction Levels Before and After Islamic Guidance Intervention Using Self-Management Techniques

3.2. Discussion

The research results indicate that the social media addiction measurement instrument developed in the form of a 30-item questionnaire has met the criteria for validity and reliability. From the validity test results, 20 items were declared valid with r -count values greater than the r -table (0.361), while the reliability test showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.786. According to the criteria from Nasution & Daulay, an instrument with an Alpha value above 0.70 is considered reliable and can be trusted to measure the research variables [14]. This finding aligns with the opinion of Sehat et al., who stated that instruments with good internal consistency (α between 0.70 and 0.90) indicate that each item supports the others in measuring the same concept [15].

At the pretest stage, all students who were research subjects (100%) showed a high level of social media addiction with an average score of 77.9. This result suggests a significant correlation between social media use and high school adolescents. This condition is relevant to the research by Hafizah & Uyun, which explains that adolescents tend to use social media excessively due to the need for social acceptance and self-validation [16]. Another study by Lubis et al. also showed that individuals with a high level of social media addiction tend to experience life imbalance, decreased study productivity, and poor self-control over time [17].

From a psychological perspective, social media addiction is closely related to low self-regulation abilities. This is emphasised by Mulawarman et al., who state that self-control is a cognitive mechanism that helps individuals delay gratification, avoid impulsive behaviors, and direct their actions toward long-term goals [18]. When teenagers fail to control their urge to use social media, they are vulnerable to addictive behaviours that negatively impact their academic performance, emotions, and spirituality. Putra & Reza's research confirms that compulsive social media use reduces activity in the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain responsible for decision-making and self-control, leading to addictive behaviours similar to substance addiction [19].

After the intervention in the form of Islamic guidance services using self-management techniques over four sessions, the post-test results showed a significant decrease in students' social media addiction levels. The average score dropped from 77.9 to 57.6, while the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test yielded a Z value of -3.839 with a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05), indicating a significant difference between the scores before and after the intervention. As many as 84.2% of students moved to the low addiction category, while 15.8% fell into the moderate category. These findings reinforce the effectiveness of interventions grounded in Islamic values in promoting self-regulation abilities and reducing excessive digital behaviour.

This result aligns with the findings of Yunitasari & Prabawa, who found that Islamic counselling services are effective in enhancing self-awareness, introspection ability, and students' emotional regulation [20]. In the context of Islamic education, the process of *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) becomes central to efforts aimed at instilling self-control and spiritual discipline. According to Al-Ghazali in *Ihya Ulumuddin*, humans need to subdue their desires through self-restraint so that their behaviour aligns with Islamic moral values. This approach is also reinforced by the research findings of Handayani et al., which found that self-management techniques in Islamic guidance can enhance students' self-regulation through stages of awareness, planning, implementation, and evaluation of behaviour based on the values of *Tawhid* [21].

In addition, research by Nurhayati et al. shows that a religious approach in guidance and counselling helps adolescents reduce risky behaviours, including digital media addiction, as it provides spiritual meaning to daily activities [22]. Within the framework of Islamic positive psychology, values such as *mujahadah* (striving earnestly against one's desires), *istiqamah* (consistency), and *taqwa* (piety) serve as reinforcing factors in building resilience against the temptations of the digital world [23].

From a statistical perspective, the increase in standard deviation from 4.2 to 6.1 after the intervention indicates variation in success among individuals. This illustrates that each student responds differently to the intervention, depending on their level of commitment, family support, and spiritual environment. Sholikha et al. state that the success of self-management programs heavily relies on intrinsic motivation and a social environment that supports behavioural change [24]. In other words, students with higher spiritual awareness show a more significant improvement in self-control.

Furthermore, the results of this study also support the Self-Determination theory proposed by Anjani et al., where intrinsic motivation guided by spiritual values can strengthen adaptive behaviour and suppress destructive behaviour [25]. In the context of Islamic guidance, this intrinsic motivation stems from faith and a sense of moral responsibility to Allah SWT, thereby encouraging students to self-regulate their use of social media.

Similar findings were also obtained by Pertiwi et al., who found that the implementation of Islamic guidance using self-management techniques reduced gadget addiction behaviour among students at Islamic State High Schools [26]. This intervention is effective because it instills the values of *murāqabah* (awareness that Allah is always watching) and *muhasabah* (self-reflection), which make students more cautious in their

digital behaviour. Thus, the changes in students are not merely a statistical decrease in scores, but also a transformation of their personality towards spiritual and emotional maturity.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that Islamic guidance combined with self-management techniques represents an integrative approach that bridges the psychological and spiritual aspects. This approach not only quantitatively reduces the symptoms of social media addiction but also enhances the quality of students' personalities through self-awareness, spiritual discipline, and moral responsibility. By internalising Islamic values in the counselling process, students learn to balance the demands of the digital world with spiritual obligations, thereby fostering healthy, productive, and ethical behaviour.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, the social media addiction measurement instrument was declared valid and reliable, with 20 statement items meeting validity criteria and a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.786, indicating high consistency. The pretest results showed that all participants fell into the high category, with an average score of 77.9. However, after being provided with Islamic guidance services using self-management techniques over four sessions, the post-test scores decreased to an average of 57.6, with the majority of students (84.2%) falling into the low category. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test yielded a Z value of -3.839 and a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating a statistically significant difference between the before and after intervention periods. This confirms that Islamic guidance services using self-management techniques are effective in reducing social media addiction levels and improving students' self-regulation abilities. Theoretically, these findings reinforce that self-control can be enhanced through an Islamically value-based spiritual approach, while practically, it can serve as an alternative preventive guidance strategy in schools. However, this study has limitations as it did not use a control group, had a limited sample size, and featured a short intervention duration. Therefore, future research is recommended to employ an experimental design involving a control group, expand the sample scope, integrate a qualitative approach, and conduct longitudinal studies to assess the sustainability of the intervention outcomes.

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