

## Digital Literacy Based on Christian Education as a Formation Tool Characteristics of Lentera Harapan Middle School and High School Students in Kupang-NTT

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### ABSTRACT

The development of the world of education and the high use of digital media today, makes students and educators need to improve themselves in a better and positive direction. If, the use of media is not accompanied by good digital literacy. As a result, students are trapped in hoaxes, sexual exploitation, cyberbullying, hate speech, digital-based radicalism, thus degrading student morals and psychology. The purpose of this writing is to overcome the explosion of technological information that continues to increase in digital sources. As a student, you need to equip yourself in digital literacy to fulfill your responsibilities in the learning system. The presence of Christian Religious Education is to equip students to maintain Christian values in the learning process. The research method used is a literature study approach, and the results of research on educators/teachers and students of Lentera Harapan Middle School and High School Students Kupang-NTT. Through the Construction Tools of school digital literacy, it provides convenience and character development for students. digital literacy as an educational coaching tool to build the character of students or students who are critical and applicable, so as to have an impact on changes in character and social situations.

**Keywords:** *Digital Literacy; Christian Education; Construction Tools, Student Character*

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### INTRODUCTION

In the development of today's world of education, digital media has turned into a primary need for students. Digital media is like the most comfortable and complete place for students. All learning activities and activities related to learning activities are always oriented to digital media. The convenience and access offered by digital media makes everything quick and easy to get and do. Where the relationship between humans and information has changed the nature of society, about what is thought and how thought develops, so that human digital culture experiences the effects of change from the ongoing digital revolution (Zhang et al., 2019). With the presence of digital media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, vlogs, blogs and so on, it creates a shift in needs that also influences the psychology and cognition of students.

Increasingly developed and high use of digital media if not accompanied by good digital literacy. Where the big influence of digital media is always integrated with students who are not critical in constructing information causing many phenomena such as hoaxes, sexuality, online fraud, gambling, exploitation, cyberbullying, hate speech, digital-based radicalism and so on (Plantin & Punathambekar, 2019). These events show that students do not understand how to use the media properly. Even though students are digital literate, students do not fully have digital literacy skills (Khan et al., 2022). As reported by Kominfo, Indonesia's digital literacy is in the medium category with a digital skill score of 3.44, a digital safety score of 3.10, an index score of 3.49. Ethics digital score 3.53, and Culture digital score 3.90. Meanwhile, in terms of the ability to understand and digest news, both negative and positive habits tend to decrease in 2021. Social media is the first and main source for students to access information. The majority of students disseminate and obtain information using WhatsApp, Facebook and Tiktok (Lovrić et al., 2020). Low digital literacy keeps many students trapped in the wrong space. Students are always interested in learning new things, but are not aware of the problems that can occur (Rebele & St. Pierre, 2019). In other words, interactions in digital media in the form of news snippets or short video clips arranged in beautiful designs will attract students to enjoy them without realizing it is good or bad. This, of course, has an impact on changing the character of students in schools who are consumptive and productive with digital media.

In the context of Christian Religious Education, digital literacy is a very important medium for conveying moral messages. Digital literacy is used to create Christian content. However, not a handful are used to weaken the morale of Christians. Therefore, the need for very strong digital literacy, so that it is critical and mature in placing itself. The importance of implementing digital literacy includes various elements of the lives of Christian students, so that Christian values and culture do not just erode.

Studies on digital literacy based on Christian education for students in schools are necessary for character building. The quality of literacy learning in Indonesia is still very low. The presence of Christian religious education teachers is needed as a motivator and facilitator of digital literacy learning for students as academic actors. The schools need to equip themselves with theological basis and Christian values and principles of communication with teachers, through digital media and digital literacy to understand various things (Sianipar et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the spiritual values and morality of children in the digital era was obtained through family Christian religious education. However, it does not specifically explain to students to be critical in using digital media or efforts to increase digital literacy (He et al., 2020).

The novelty of this writing is to explain the importance of digital literacy for students as a place for learning, thinking critically, creatively, and innovatively. The goal is that students are not easily influenced by things that will harm themselves and those around them. But more than that, students make digital literacy a competency to produce something of value. Christian religious education is an integral part of implementing digital literacy. Christian religious education has a duty to continue to adapt to technological

developments, and to anticipate that its digital literacy remains in the realm of God's truth, namely the Bible.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a literature study approach to collect references about Christian education-based digital literacy to shape the character of students in the era of disruption. Data collection was carried out by tracing physical sources in the form of books and journals and other supporting media. The data collected is descriptive qualitative in nature, through sentence statements and research results written by other authors to be used as research data on digital literacy based on Christian education to shape student character (Sundler et al., 2019). And the results of research on SMP and SMA Lentera Harapan Kupang -NTT. The result of the research is that the presence of Christian religious education aims to equip students to maintain Christian values through the development of school digital literacy.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **Digital Literacy**

Digital literacy is a form of human ability to respond wisely and critically to online information. Digital literacy as an effort to filter accurate information. Digital literacy involves human cognitive and constructive aspects. Digital literacy sets the standard in critical thinking to protect humans from misinformation (Reddy et al., 2020).

Anticipate unwanted things. Mars explained that digital literacy is a social practice for reading, writing, and making meaning through the use of digital media (Qin, 2023) Digital information that moves without stopping and ease of access, makes students need to have skills in sorting the information received. Digital communication and information skills are at the core of digital literacy competencies. Students need and must have the ability to master digital technology devices. Digital technology devices that are mastered are not only the internet, but various types of digital technology such as mastery of communication systems. Mastery of digital technology is considered a clear stage for digital literacy skills (List, 2019).

In its application, digital literacy needs to pay attention to its essence. Katrīna Elizabete Biezā explains that the essence of digital literacy includes a) understanding in the context of digital culture; b) understanding of thinking in the digital realm; c) understanding and creating positive things through digital; d) understand the performance of digital media communications; e) confident and responsible; f) creatively creating new things through digital media; and g) critically filter information from digital media (Biezā, 2020). In line with that, Luci etc. said that digital literacy has four basic principles, namely, a) understanding to understand the information provided by the media; b) interdependence between one media and another to complement each other; c) social factors to share messages or information with the public; d) curation includes the ability to access, understand and store information (Pangrazio et al., 2020). While Wheeler said that to understand digital literacy, components such as social networks, transliteration, maintaining privacy, managing

identity, creating content, organizing and sharing content, reusing content, filtering and selecting content are needed (Ogbonnaya-Ogburu et al., 2019).

The current development of globalization, especially digital literacy in Lentera Kupang Middle School and High School, NTT, digital literacy is not something new. The digital learning process since 2012 has always used digital media, and the fact that digital literacy is really needed, because of changes every school year and new students entering school. To respond to the development of the learning process, educators and education staff become motivators for students at Lentera Middle School and High School as a whole, integrating digital literacy into the learning process.

**The Impact of Lack of Digital Literacy on Student Character** The presence of technology has become a major force that requires a response, so digital literacy in the era of disruption is very important. Social change in the world of education is more centered on technological innovation. The social changes that occur are progress/regression in nature, regarding social values. Progress in any field leads to a change in the student climate, according to technological principles. The good digital literacy improves performance, whereas poor literacy negatively affects social life (Agustini et al., 2020).

Technology forces the continuity of strategies for various groups and society, especially the world of education. This process has brought students as the dominant group in the formation of sophisticated technological norms and social orders. The challenges that arise are also not easy. On the other hand, students are easily trapped in the spread of hoaxes (Pradoko, 2021), online fraud, cyberbullying, hate speech, and digital-based radicalism. As quoted by Infojateng, the lack of digital skills results in sub-optimal use of digital media. The effects of the pace of information technology and the lack of digital literacy have resulted in everyone (students) easily sharing information without considering the truth, so that they are trapped in the negative behavior of using digital media (Dolan et al., 2019). Weak digital culture creates violations of citizens' digital rights.

The implication for student morality is slowly degraded, giving rise to crime and thuggery. Moral degradation such as violence and anarchy, free sex, theft, brawls between students, lack of tolerance, bad and dishonest speech, drug abuse are part of the lack of digital literacy. Student moral degradation has become a hallmark of 21st century culture (Yulianti et al., 2021).

### **Digital Literacy in Biblical Perspective**

Basically, humans make technology and use it to carry out activities in everyday life. In this case, technology has existed since humans were created. God has equipped humans with the power to think (Gen. 1:27-31). The goal is for humans to think and be able to explore the potential of nature to meet their needs (Chawla, 2020).

The Bible records that the use of nature as a teaching medium is always used by God to communicate with His people. In the Bible, there are several media that God uses as visual aids to convey His message. One of them, God uses the medium of vessels (Jer. 18:1-7) to express what is in his heart to the Israelites. While the new agreement, God uses a lot of media in his teaching. The parable of the sower (Matt. 13:3, 4, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23; Mr 4:3,

4, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20; Lu 8:5), the weeds among the wheat ( Mt 13:24, 27, 37, 39), mustard seeds (Mt 13:31; Mr 4:31, 32).

Thus, it can be seen that technology has existed since the time humans were created. Allah ordered humans to create technology. God himself was directly involved in creating technology. God equips humans with knowledge to use technology. In this case, Allah does not prohibit humans from creating, using and developing technology. God has given the mandate to manage the universe for human needs (Pasaribu et al., 2022). Therefore, God uses natural technology to educate humans to understand the reality of their lives.

### **Christian Religious Education as Digital Literacy Media**

The presence of Christian Religious Education (CRE) aims to equip students to maintain Christian values. Pandie quoted Rantung as saying that Christian religious education has three roles, namely an educative role, a social role and a spiritual role. These three roles actually aim to build moral and good human resources through teaching, practice, obedience, social life and commitment to faith (Mousa & Chaouali, 2022). The implementation of Christian religious education is not limited by space and time. Christian religious education has the opportunity to educate students about Christian values. Christian religious education also has the opportunity to build new skills in proclaiming the existence of God. Christian religious education needs to improve and continue to seek Christian education that is strong and full of integrity, this is fully to reach many groups, especially students.

In times of global social crisis and conflict, digital media literacy becomes critical for the normal progression of social events and their interpretation. In this regard, digital citizenship aids social comprehension and control, as well as individual practice (Milenkova & Lendzhova, 2021).

Therefore, digital literacy is an important tool for building the character of young people who are critical and applicable, so that it has an impact on changing their character and social situation. That is, technology has an impact which then makes Christian religious education respond with critical thoughts and concrete actions.

The development of digital literacy can be carried out in the school realm. With digital literacy, students and education staff are expected to have the ability to access, understand, and use digital media, communication tools, and networks. Through these capabilities, students can create new information and disseminate it wisely. In this period, the concept of "digital religion" is used to investigate how religious identities, groups, and authorities change in the internet age (Evolvi, 2021). Besides being able to master the basics of computers, the internet, productive programs, as well as the security and confidentiality of an application. Students also have a digital lifestyle, so that all their daily activities are inseparable from an effective and efficient mindset and behavior.

## CONCLUSION

Students are the cornerstone of the world of education and the progress of a nation. Students become school representatives. Students should be critical and creative individuals in using digital media. The goal is not only to know, but to contribute to the sustainability of the school. Lentera Harapan Middle School and High School Kupang-NTT develop digital literacy from an early age. Digital literacy is an alternative for building student character in an era of technological disruption that cannot be stopped by anything. As an Educator, I have always had a vision and belief that good digital literacy will produce students with good character. conversely, poor digital literacy will produce students with bad character. Therefore, digital literacy as a tool for fostering education is to build the critical and applicable character of students or young people, so as to have an impact on changing their character and social situation. So that technological developments have an impact which then makes Christian religious education respond with critical thoughts and real action in everyday life, in the development of education today.

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