Digital Literacy of Millennials Santri: A Case Study In Pondok Pesantren Tahfidzul Quran Al-Jihadul Chakim Mojokerto

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Abstract:

Pesantren or Islamic Boarding Schools is a type of classical educational institution that still exists nowadays. As time goes by, Pesantren always has formal educational institutions in the form of madrasah. Students who live in pesantren are identified as students who do not know the advancement of technology. Moreover, not being allowed to use cell phones in the pesantren area is being another trigger. The purpose of this study is to find the related approach of MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim in facilitating their students in digital literacy. This study uses qualitative methods, focusing on digital literacy. The results of this study found that MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim as a pesantren-based madrasah provides programs and facilities for its students to have digital literacy skills. The form of those approaches are programs such as ICT-based learning, assistance in managing social media wisely, coaching graphic design skills, and photos/videography program.

Kata Kunci: Literacy; Digital; Students.
1. Introduction

Digital literacy is a skill that is as important as reading, writing, arithmetic, and other scientific disciplines. The mindset raised with constant access to digital technology is very different from previous times. Everyone should be able to assume some level of responsibility for how they use technology to engage with their environment. People can now contact and communicate with their friends and family in their daily lives because of this digitalization. Unfortunately, the internet is currently becoming increasingly saturated with hoax, hate speech, extremism, and such cyber deception.¹

Instance raising awareness among individuals is the only way to stop the constant harm that is destroying the digital ecosystem we have today. If we want to be considered digitally literate, we must be able to classify the different types of information, understand different types of messages, and communicate successfully with others using different media. In this particular example, the form in question includes the activities of producing, collaborating, communicating, and working by ethical principles, as well as having an understanding of when and how technology should be utilized effectively to achieve goals. This includes comprehension, and having the ability to think critically about the various benefits and dangers that may arise from the use of various forms of technology.

In 2015, the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) initiated the school literacy campaign to improve the quality of human resources that are produced as a result of the School Literacy Movement. The program aims to inspire and develop a good reading habit. It was initiated for netizens to be able to filter and sort the information they consume. According to O’Brien and Schwarber's article (Puspito, 2017), digital literacy has the potential to be a source of real learning that can be used as a reference.²

In the implementation of digital literacy in education, it is essential to build programs that can be integrated well into existing learning plans. Santri needs to get training on some necessary skills for digital literacy, for example, creativity, and school administrators need to promote and encourage digital literacy movements in schools. The GLN (National Literation Action) Team of the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017) stated that five different approaches can be used to encourage digital literacy in educational institutions. The approaches are as follows:³

a. Improving facilitator capabilities.
b. Increasing the quality of learning resources.

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Digital literacy refers to an analytical and creative skill, and it has recently been much discussed. People who have digital literacy skills will be more aware when they assume information. They also can examine the content credibility and have a comprehension of how to utilize digital media. Therefore, this skill will have an impact on the social and cultural life of society if it is embedded in the particular school. This is because education plays an important role in the formation of a person's character. To successfully build this culture, the cooperation of all stakeholders is essential. It is important to ensure the achievement of specific indicators in the education and culture sector through the development of digital literacy.

Regarding the significant topic of digital literacy, it is necessary to acknowledge and celebrate the ongoing evolution of Islamic boarding school literacy to facilitate the growth of students' knowledge and skills. Furthermore, it is also necessary to plan and support the development of this literacy. Digital literacy is significant to be taught in Islamic boarding schools to support the development of a moderate Islamic viewpoint tawassut. Digital literacy is still not yet commonly taught in Islamic boarding schools. However, digital literacy is important to make students more aware of religious conservatism, hoaxes, and Islamism wrapped up in the popular study of religion. Furthermore, the moment when Islamic boarding school students are unable to organize and filter the current Islamic discourse is the moment when digital literacy will be more widespread than the traditional literacy established by Islamic boarding schools.4

Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Jihadul Chakim has made innovations in developing digital literacy awareness for its students, including the application of computer-based learning which was carried out on 23 selected students divided into two classes. Webinars or online seminars are also often carried out. Innovative socialization of how to use technology appropriately, MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim is also active in cyberspace by managing Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube accounts as a means of introducing the academic world and the learning system in the madrasah. This research highlights how the madrasah facilitates its students who live in Islamic boarding schools to have digital literacy skills.5

2. Methods
This research uses a qualitative approach that focuses on collecting in depth data from one or several cases to understand certain phenomena. With the type of research and approach used by the researcher, the aim is to understand the meaning, interpretation, and subjective perspective given by the informant regarding what will be researched related to digital literacy in Islamic boarding school MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim Gondang, Mojokerto.

Research conducted at MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim Gondang Mojokerto aims to find out how this Islamic boarding school-based madrasah equips its students with digital literacy. The research was conducted in June 2023. In this research,

data collection techniques were carried out using observation, interviews, and documentation.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The Urgent of Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is an important skill for anyone who wants to be able to take part in the activities of today's world. This is one thing everyone should understand. Reading, writing, arithmetic, and other traditional forms of literacy are as important as digital literacy. The current generation needs this skill because everyone needs to take personal responsibility for how they use technology to interact with their environment. People can now contact and communicate with their friends and family easier than before because of digital technology. Unfortunately, the internet is currently increasingly saturated with hoaxes, hate speeches, extremism, and even fraudulent acts. Building awareness among individuals is the only strategy that will be effective in combating the proliferation of harmful information that is now wreaking disaster in the digital environment.

If we want to be considered digitally literate, we must be able to absorb various types of information, understand various types of communication, and interact well with other people using various types of media. In this case, the form in question involves the processes of producing, collaborating, communicating, and following ethical principles, as well as having an awareness of when and how technology should be utilized effectively to achieve goals. Awareness and critical thinking about the various good and bad impacts that may arise due to the use of technology in everyday life are also included in this aspect of the concept. Encourage people to become active producers of information, not just passive consumers of information, both at the individual level and as part of a community. If young people do not acquire sufficient digital skills, there is a high probability that they will fall behind the struggle for employment, democratic engagement, and social contact.6

Increasing digital literacy will lead to a society that has a greater capacity for critical and innovative thinking. They will not be easily swayed by contentious topics, or deceived by scams centered on internet platforms. As a result, community members can expect that their involvement in the social and cultural life of the community will generally be safe and accepted. The entire community needs to be actively involved in the process of developing a digital literacy culture before it can be considered successful. The extent to which a person can acquire digital literacy is one of the criteria used to evaluate his or her level of achievement in the fields of education and culture.

In this case, MTs students of Al-Jihadul Chakim also needs to be given an understanding of digital literacy because it can develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed to navigate an environment with rich information on digitalization. Considering that there are no limitations in exploring technology, there is a need for digital literacy guidance so that students can be careful in using technology, especially in avoiding cybercrime, and more broadly, students can help to optimize the role of MTs. Al-Jihadul Chakim through the appropriate use of technology, such as introducing the cyber community to the importance of Islamic boarding school education in the current era, as well as introducing the profile of MTs institutions Al-Jihadul Chakim so that it can be known widely.

3.2 Challenges and Opportunities for Santri

One aspect that distinguishes the digital era is the widespread use of automatic processes and robotic labor in various industrial sectors. As a method to adapt to new circumstances and continue the spread of Islamic Da’wah in the era of Industrial Revolution, humans need to understand and become proficient in digital skills. Students are expected to understand and become proficient in 4.0 digital skills. The students are now quite comfortable with this technology, and the flow of knowledge through the internet will certainly turn the students’ literacy intelligence into something that is certainly a necessity.\(^7\)

The capacity for digital mastery is the gateway to the growth of Islamic Da’wah which is more acceptable to society and on a global scale. Therefore, the application of digital literacy is the opening access to information and the use of digital infrastructure as a method to increase students’ capabilities in increasing Islamic propagation in a global and digital environment. This is achieved through the use of digital infrastructure as a way to increase student capacity. One technique for increasing santri (student) digital literacy is to utilize existing digital infrastructure. Students can build collective awareness of digital literacy as a modern da’wah technique by using digital literacy skills as a strategy to build insight and capacity in using digital literacy as a contemporary da’wah method. This can be done through implementing digital literacy as a strategy. One of the goals of developing digital literacy is to encourage the production and distribution of religious content in the digital realm; This is expected to bridge the realization of the goals achieved. This is done to protect internet users from the spread of religious extremism.\(^8\)

Santri is required to become a digital media agent to be able to filter contemporary Islamic topics so that they do not result in hate speech and Islamic misconceptions. This is due to the volume of contemporary Islamic issues. The formation of digital literacy helps santri improve their reading skills; However, there is a risk that this training will not be balanced in proportion to the capacity to write. Santri can produce more original ideas in terms of producing scientific material as a result of implementing a digital literacy culture. As well as better-quality presentation content.\(^9\)

The adoption of digital literacy makes the classroom environment less monotonous and more interesting, which in turn encourages students to continue their education.\(^10\) It is not surprising that the application of digital literacy is considered very central and important in the development of learning in Islamic boarding school-based madrasas. This is because digital literacy can integrate various sub-disciplines (literature, journalism, and philosophy) into one platform.\(^11\) It is estimated that increasing santri exposure to digital literacy can lead to increased santri learning motivation.\(^12\)

\(^7\) Abdullloh Hamid, *Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Pesantren (Pelajar Dan Santri Dalam Era IT&Cyber Culture)*, (Surabaya: Imtiyaz, 2017), 166
\(^11\) Mandy R. Menke and Kate Paesani, “Analysing Foreign Language Instructional Materials through the Lens of the Multiliteracies Framework,” *Language, Culture and
3.3 Support for Students in the Digital Era

Apart from offering teaching material in the form of dictation, Islamic boarding schools can also assist students in developing the life skills needed in today’s digital era. Life skills are psychosocial abilities to act adaptively and constructively which enable students to successfully meet their needs and overcome the problems they face every day in life. Life skills can be separated into soft skills and hard skills.

There are several skills that students need to have, especially in this digital era, for example, entrepreneurship, public speaking, and mastery of foreign languages. Developing an entrepreneurial spirit is very important in the modern era of digital technology because it allows students to recognize opportunities to become entrepreneurs, which is then hoped to create job opportunities for others. Students need to develop their entrepreneurial skills to become more sensitive to the possibilities in life. Entrepreneurial skills can be interpreted as a requirement for knowing the chance in life. To be able to start a business, it is very important to have the capacity to survive. On the other hand, santri need to get motivated so that they can be entrepreneurs in the future.

One of the skills that requires regular practice to achieve mastery is the ability to speak in public. To be successful at public speaking, strong linguistic skills are needed. Especially if it is used for beginners who are just starting, several things need to be prepared. The most important thing is the material and self-motivation to practice regularly. A person can be considered adept at public speaking if they can conquer their nervousness and have confidence while communicating their thoughts and ideas to the audience. Therefore, in this age of technology, students need to have the ability to support their life skills through public speaking. Acquiring a foreign language is beneficial for a student. Learning a second language is mandatory before graduating from an Islamic boarding school. Students are expected to be fluent in one international language in addition to other foreign languages.

Because of the advancement of technology, information, and communications, this issue is something that must be discussed. Mentoring programs at Islamic boarding schools are an excellent way to help students acquire these important life skills. A person’s life skills can also be enhanced by acquiring 21st-century skills, which include three main categories: basic literacy, competency category, and character quality category. Life skills can also be improved by acquiring 21st-century skills. Skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and discovery, communication, and collaborative skills are covered in competency areas. Character includes curiosity, initiative, uncompromising, adaptability, leadership, and having social and cultural awareness.

Research shows that there is a strong relationship between 21st-century digital literacy skills for students and the MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim today. Santri who have a high level of digital literacy generally have a significant advantage in their educational journey within Islamic boarding schools, because they have wider access to digital learning materials. In addition, digital literacy helps students apply and understand religious principles in a way that is compatible with modern technology. Therefore, it can be said that the programs of MTs.
Al-Jihadul Chakim to instill an understanding of digital literacy which is very relevant to their success in facing the demands of the modern world.

3.4 Strengthening Digital Literacy at MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim
a. ICT-based learning

Currently, the term information and communication technologies (ICT) is used quite often. When most people hear the word "technology," the first thing that comes to mind is anything electronic, like a computer or smartphone. Educators are required to have comprehensive knowledge of current technology and be competent in using this knowledge to improve their students' learning experience. In terms of educating educators in the field of human resources who can utilize ICT to improve the educational process, one of the most important concerns that must be addressed is the need to increase the level of ICT literacy that educators already possess. It is hoped that this capacity will benefit educators in a variety of ways, including the production of teaching materials, learning processes, and learning evaluation, with the ultimate goal of increasing commitment to learning to pursue the achievement of learning goals.14

The use of ICT as a learning medium helps instructors overcome challenges in the communication process with students, including physiological, cultural, and environmental barriers. As a result, the learning process will become more efficient, and will also make the learning process more effective. This is in line with the statement of Mrs. Rizka Khusnul Khotimah who is the Deputy Head of the Madrasah for Student Affairs and is one of the pioneers in strengthening the understanding of digital literacy at MTs. Al-Jihadul Chakim “The program implemented in our Santri learning system has been transformed into a computer-based one, starting from learning in classes that are equipped with computers and LCD projectors, the availability of computer laboratories specifically for Santri, and various training related to how to understand and implement digital literacy.” Therefore, the learning process will become more efficient. Computers, LCD projectors, Internet-based assignments, Learning CDs, E-mail, and PowerPoint presentations are examples of other forms of ICT-based learning tools and media that can be utilized in the learning process that takes place at MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim Mojokerto. Teachers improve their ability to master information and communication technology (ICT) by participating in training activities or seminars on ICT, installing ICT-based facilities and infrastructure to support learning, and conducting comparative studies with schools that are considered more advanced in ICT. These are how teachers can improve their ability to master ICT.15

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b. Be wise and smart in using social media

The use of social media is becoming an integral aspect of our lives in this technological era. The advancement of social media has made communicating with others easier. Everyone can express themselves to a large number of people through the use of social media. The benefits of using social media are very significant. However, this depends on how we use it. When we behave according to the rules and conventions of social media, we will get positive results from social media.

Islamic boarding school regulations in MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim with female students live in the boarding room, do not allow the students to bring communication devices in the form of cell phones. The reason that Islamic boarding schools prohibit the use of cell phones for female students is because female students have to focus on their main tasks, namely studying and worship. The question that may arise is what if they become left behind? Of course, it is the job of madrasas to ensure that female students have enough skills so that when they graduate from madrasas, they do not become old-fashioned teenagers who are easily carried away because while at school they are not allowed to use communication tools.

To prevent this matter, MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim provides facilities for its female students in social media, among these facilities are students trained to become content creators, among these coaching programs. The first program is “Halo Vlogger” coaching program is carried out monthly and contains training on speaking in front of the camera. The next program is “Know Insight” program which is carried out occasionally in one semester and contains training in reading audience graphs from the content that has been created. The last program is “Design Literacy” that held occasionally in one semester and contains training on how to create designs for content needs on social media.

Through these programs, students are trained to become talents in content creation. The content in question is photo/video content that contains useful information or knowledge. Da'wah through content which will later be uploaded on various social media platforms which are often accessed by the public through MTs' official social media. Al-Jihadul Chakim includes Instagram link at https://www.instagram.com/aljihadulchakim/, TikTok at https://www.tiktok.com/@aljihadulchakim?_t=8mKU2bDGqP3&_r=1, Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/aljihadulchakim/, and YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/@aljihadulchakim9316.

Furthermore, this training will provide positive things that will enable them to use social media as a medium for sharing knowledge in a modern and fun way so that it does not make them bored. Currently, many ulama/teachers/lecturers also do da’wah via social media, and the wider community is easily accepting and many are interested, this is the same as what the Wali Songo do who preach according to things that local people like, such as wayang, in this day and age, almost every generation of people is already proficient in accessing social media such as TikTok and Instagram, if the students use these media, it will spread the teachings of the Quran and Islam that guided by responsible content and ethics.

16 Kirk W. Duthler, “The Politeness of Requests Made via Email and Voicemail: Support
Creating educational content in social media becomes proof that the student who chooses an Islamic boarding school education will not be left behind by technological advances. This can prove that santri who has not only religious sciences but also modern sciences background, they continue to use them for the benefit of religion and humanity. Not only being talented in content, but female students are also taught to become social media admins. Looking at the future needs of the public, various skills are needed, one of which is for marketing purposes, an admin who is capable of reading opportunities. In this case, MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim provides knowledge on how to become a wise social media admin.

c. Graphic Design and Photo/Videography Skills Development

1) Graphic design

Graphic design is the act of communicating through the use of visual components, such as language, shapes, and images, which are intended to create an impression of the message being given. The term graphic design originally referred to processes applied to static media such as books, magazines, and brochures. Additionally, the Times reports that graphic design is also used in electronic media production, a practice sometimes referred to as interactive design or multimedia design. The basics of visual design can be broken down into components, including color, shape, form, and texture, as well as line and space. Thereafter, the structural features of the larger composition are established based on these principles, which may include balance, rhythm, emphasis, proportion, and unity, then develop more comprehensive structural aspects.17

Realizing the importance of graphic design skills, one option that can be implemented at MTS Al-Jihadul Chakim Mojokerto is to include learning related to graphic design skills in one of the extracurricular activities offered at the school. More precisely, one of the things done to promote soft skills in the field of information technology is providing training in computer graphic design skills. With this training, students can simplify pamphlets and posters about the material and lessons they received during their studies at the Islamic boarding school.

2) Photo/Videography training

Photography functions as a visual-based communication medium. One of the many benefits of photography is its ability to record genuine, significant, and trustworthy events and moments. This allows photography to function as a visual medium for communication. Photography in particular can be used as a medium for online da'wah through photos that are made in such a way as to convey the message to the public/society.

In creating educational content via social media, photography, and videography skills are required. Da'wah often uses photography as a medium because photography is more contemporary, adaptable, and concise than other communication methods. The majority of da'wah accounts use photography as a supplement to communicating

information and messages of goodness. One example is the *Dawuh Guru* Twitter account, which uses photos of the ulama with quotes or words of wisdom from this ulama to accompany the photos. Photography is easier to be accepted by people in today's society, so that many social media accounts use it in Islamic da’wah activities that are shared via social media. Thus, da’wah through photography functions as a medium for Islamic da’wah, which has many advantages.\(^\text{18}\)

The previous program was to achieve the ideals of the nation which is trying to enhance human resources starting now. This is a form of provision for the students that we had prepared with technology from the early age so that when they come back to society, their mindset will be mature, and we hope it will be a provision in facing the digital transformation in the future for the next few years, this country will be led by today's teenagers and children. If they are well-equipped with many useful skills and knowledge, of course, they will be more focused and able to see various opportunities that they can use as a means to develop their potential.

4. Conclusion

One of the phenomena of Islamic education that is a response to the growth of a global and digital society is the emergence of digital literacy. In Islamic boarding schools, digital literacy can bring improvements to students as long as it is introduced carefully and continually returns to the guiding principles and values of the educational process.

Students at the Islamic boarding school-based madrasah MTs Al-Jihadul Chakim utilized with social media, online media, and digital media as forms of media and learning materials to meet this global, all-digital challenge. This is an example of the prioritization of digital literacy. The form of instilling a digital literacy culture in students is carried out in various ways, namely ICT-based learning, wise use of social media, and development of graphic design and photo/videography skills.

All the efforts made are to achieve the ideals of the nation which is trying to invest in human resources starting now. Because in the next few years, this country will be led by today's teenagers and children. When the students are already equipped with many useful skills and knowledge, of course, they will have more opportunities to face the future.

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