Empowering The Future Generation of Muslims Through Digital Literacy: Lessons from Ngaji Literasi Digital in Darussalam Islamic Boarding School Banyuwangi

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Abstract

This research explores the significance of digital literacy for students in Islamic boarding schools, with a particular focus on Ngaji Literasi Digital program by Duta Santri Nasional at Darussalam Banyuwangi Islamic boarding school. The study aims to demonstrate how this program can increase awareness among students about the importance of digital literacy knowledge in today's world. The paper is using descriptive qualitative design, emphasizes the need to empower the future generation of Muslims through digital literacy and provides insights into how this can be achieved in Islamic boarding schools based on observation and interview. This research limits the extent of the impact that the Ngaji Literasi Digital program has had on students at the Darussalam Islamic Boarding School in Banyuwangi. Ngaji Literasi Digital is a collaborative program between the Duta Santri Nasional and the Indonesian Ministry of Communication and Informatics as well as Siberkreasi. The program was designed to promote digital literacy among young learners through workshops and seminars that focus on three main materials: digital culture, digital ethics, and digital skills. For the result, the program was proved successful in raising the awareness index of digital literacy for the students..
Keywords: digital literacy, islamic boarding school, empowerment

Introduction

In today's modern world, digital technology has transformed how to communicate, learn, and work. With the rapid advancement of technology, digital literacy has become a vital skill for individuals to participate in and navigate the digital world effectively. Digital literacy is the ability to use digital technology, communicate, and create digital content using a range of digital tools and technologies. As digital technology becomes increasingly integrated into every aspect of our lives, digital literacy has become crucial for young learners to succeed in their academic, personal, and professional lives (Sari, 2022). It has become a necessary skill set for future careers, and it is essential to provide digital literacy education to students at an early age.

According to Paul Gilster, an American technology and society expert, digital literacy is not just about technical knowledge but also about critical thinking, creativity, and social responsibility. He defines digital literacy as "the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide range of sources when it is presented via computers" (Gilster, 1997). Digital literacy also includes the ability to critically evaluate digital information, analyze and interpret data, and engage with digital media effectively. In addition, digital literacy empowers learners to communicate and collaborate with others online, express themselves creatively, and contribute to their communities digitally.

In Islamic boarding schools, digital literacy education is particularly significant as it allows Muslim students to navigate digital content and participate in the digital world while remaining true to their religious values. Islamic boarding schools have a vital role in educating young learners on how to use digital technology safely and responsibly, providing a platform to foster ethical values and good moral conduct

(Haris, 2023). By providing digital literacy education, students can develop the skills and knowledge required to explore and create in the digital world.

However, despite the importance of digital literacy education for young learners, including students in Islamic boarding schools, there are still significant gaps in digital literacy education in Indonesia, particularly in the pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) context (Fadli & Dwiningrum, 2021). Pesantren in Indonesia are renowned for their traditional education system, emphasizing Islamic studies and character-building. However, this traditional approach has often resulted in pesantren lagging in technology adoption and digital literacy education.

A study conducted by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of Indonesia found that only 8.3% of pesantren in Indonesia had access to the internet, and less than 1% had implemented digital literacy education programs (Kemenkominfo, 2018). This highlights a significant digital divide between pesantren and conventional schools in Indonesia, which could potentially limit the opportunities for pesantren students to compete in the digital age.

Moreover, pesantren leaders and educators have often been reluctant to incorporate digital technology into their curriculum, citing concerns that technology could disrupt traditional Islamic values and culture (Suroso et al., 2021). This resistance to change has resulted in a lack of digital literacy education in pesantren, which could potentially hinder pesantren students' access to knowledge and information in the digital age. Therefore, recent initiatives such as Ngaji Literasi Digital program have aimed to bridge the digital divide and promote digital literacy education in pesantren. These initiatives have been successful in increasing awareness of the importance of digital literacy among pesantren leaders and educators and have resulted in the implementation of digital literacy education in some pesantren.

Methods

To ensure the validity and reliability of study findings, the choice of research design is essential. In this study, a descriptive qualitative research design was chosen as it enables the researcher to explore and describe the impact of Ngaji Literasi Digital on Islamic boarding school students in detail. Descriptive qualitative research design is a flexible and comprehensive approach that allows the researcher to collect data through interviews, observations, and document analysis. This design is appropriate for exploring complex phenomena, social issues, and experiences that cannot be measured quantitatively. Moreover, qualitative research design is highly contextual and provides a rich and detailed account of the research participants' experiences, perspectives, and insights. The main objective of this research is to understand the impact of Ngaji Literasi Digital on Islamic boarding school students, and thus, the descriptive qualitative research design is the most appropriate approach to achieve this goal.

For this research, the instrument and data collection method used is observation and interview. The researcher visited Darussalam Islamic Boarding School to participate in the Ngaji Literasi Digital program, which was carried out by Duta Santri Nasional. The observation method is chosen because it allows the researcher to collect data through direct interaction and participation in the program. By participating in the program, the researcher can directly observe the impact of Ngaji Literasi Digital on the students of the Islamic boarding school.

After collecting the data from the participants who are the 60 students of Darussalam Islamic Boarding School, the next step is to analyze and present the

findings. The first step is to classify the participants according to their gender, which consists of 30 boys and 30 girls students. Then, the data will be analyzed to determine their level of digital literacy. The analysis will include their ability to use technology, understand digital culture, digital ethics, and digital skills.

To analyze the level of digital literacy of the participants, the data collected through observation will be analyzed based on the existing literature and theoretical framework related to digital literacy. The analysis will be conducted by looking at the level of proficiency of the participants in using digital technology, their understanding of digital culture, digital ethics, and digital skills. The results of this analysis will be presented in the form of a detailed report.

Finally, the third step is to analyze the impact of Ngaji Literasi Digital on the digital literacy of the participants. This analysis will be done by comparing the level of digital literacy of the participants before and after participating in the program. The analysis will include the changes in their ability to use technology, understanding of digital culture, digital ethics, and digital skills.

Furthermore, the findings will be presented in a comprehensive report, which will include an overview of the research design, the methodology used, and the data analysis. The report will also include a summary of the findings, the conclusions drawn from the findings, and recommendations for further research. The report will be written in a clear and concise manner, using appropriate language and technical terms to ensure that the findings are understandable and accessible to the target audience.

Results

The first result of this study shows that not all students are familiar with digital literacy, despite the fact that we are living in the digital age. However, it is important to note that this lack of familiarity does not necessarily indicate disinterest or lack of motivation to learn. In fact, many students expressed enthusiasm to learn digital literacy skills, as they realize the importance of these skills for their future academic and professional success.

This finding is in line with the theory of self-determination, which suggests that individuals have an innate desire to learn and develop their skills and knowledge (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the context of this study, the students' desire to learn digital literacy skills can be seen as a manifestation of their need for competence and autonomy, two of the basic psychological needs identified by self-determination theory. Students who feel competent and autonomous are more likely to engage in learning activities, including the acquisition of digital literacy skills.

Moreover, this finding also aligns with the concept of the digital divide, which refers to the unequal distribution of digital technology and digital literacy skills among different social groups (Warschauer & Matuchniak, 2010). In many cases, students from disadvantaged backgrounds or underprivileged communities may not have access to the resources and opportunities that would allow them to develop digital literacy skills. However, it is encouraging to see that despite this digital divide, the students in this study expressed a strong desire to learn and improve their digital literacy skills.

The second result of this study revealed that the lack of digital literacy knowledge among the students is not due to excessive screen time, because they have access to computer and internet, but rather because there is no particular program to

introduce them to digital literacy skills, such as the Ngaji Literasi Digital program. However, the students show a strong enthusiasm for learning digital literacy skills, as they realize the importance of this skill. This finding is supported by the theory of digital citizenship by Ribble (2015), which emphasizes the importance of introducing students to digital literacy skills, including ethical and responsible behavior, as a critical component of becoming responsible digital citizens.

Furthermore, this finding has led to a realization from Siber Kreasi about the urgency of introducing digital literacy skills to Islamic school students. Siber Kreasi's support of the Ngaji Literasi Digital program highlights the recognition of the importance of digital literacy skills in the current digital age. This is in line with the theory of digital transformation by Westerman et al. (2014), which emphasizes that organizations must embrace the digital age to remain relevant and competitive. In the case of education, embracing digital literacy skills is crucial for preparing students for the future job market and ensuring their success in a digitally-driven society.

The success of the Ngaji Literasi Digital program was measured by an observation and interview among students regarding the awareness index of the importance of digital literacy after joining the program. Aside from the program, Darussalam Islamic Boarding School also provided students with access to digital technology, including computers and the internet. The school established a computer laboratory that is available for student use, enabling students to access digital resources and learn essential digital skills.

Figures and Tables

As this research adopts a qualitative research method, the presentation of quantitative figures and tables may not be applicable or relevant to the nature of the study. Instead, the section will be utilized to provide a detailed account and analysis of the interview results. This section serves as a means to organize and present the rich qualitative data derived from the interviews with the participants.

The interview results will be presented in a textual format, allowing for the exploration and interpretation of participants' responses, narratives, and thematic patterns that emerged during the interviews. By structuring the section around key themes or categories that surfaced from the data analysis, readers will gain a deeper understanding of the participants' thoughts, experiences, and perspectives related to digital literacy.

The use of subheadings within the section will aid in organizing and delineating the different themes, ensuring clarity and coherence in the presentation of the interview results. These subheadings will guide the readers through the various aspects of digital literacy discussed by the participants, highlighting the diversity and depth of their responses.

Additionally, direct quotes or excerpts from the interviews will be incorporated into the text to support and illustrate the presented themes. By including these qualitative data excerpts, readers will be able to connect directly with the participants' voices, gaining a more immersive understanding of their perspectives on digital literacy in the context of Islamic boarding schools. Ultimately, this section will effectively replace the traditional use of figures and tables, offering a comprehensive exploration and analysis of the interview results

The participants in this research were 60 students of Darussalam Islamic Boarding School, who were selected based on their interest and willingness to learn digital literacy skills. The population consisted of an equal number of male and female students, with 30 students of each gender. The students came from diverse backgrounds and had different levels of prior experience with digital technologies. However, they all shared a common interest in developing their digital literacy skills.

Due to space and readability restrictions, it would be impractical to include every participant's specific replies and experiences in the paper, which has a sample size of 60 participants. Therefore, two participants—one male and one female—will be chosen to reflect the general sentiments and themes that came out of the interviews in order to give a representative grasp of the participants' perspectives
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The selected participants will represent the range of experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds included in the wider sample. Participants will be chosen with care based on their ability to contribute original ideas, gripping stories, or viewpoints that are particularly representative of the main trends revealed by the data analysis.

In order to protect the participants' privacy and confidentiality, pseudonyms or codes will be used throughout the study. This method adequately represents the wide range of opinions present in the study while upholding anonymity and ethical considerations.

Here is the result of the interview:

Interviewer: "Assalamu'alaikum, Ahmad and Fitri. Thank you for participating in this research. I would like to hear Ahmad's opinion first about how Ngaji Literasi Digital has provided significant benefits for you. What are your thoughts on this, Ahmad?"

Ahmad: "Wa'alaikumsalam. Of course, I'm glad to help. For me, Ngaji Literasi Digital is an interesting combination of two important aspects of our lives, which are religion and digital technology. When we study religious texts, we gain valuable knowledge. However, with digital literacy, this knowledge becomes more easily accessible, learnable, and shareable with many people."

"Through Ngaji Literasi Digital, I can quickly and easily access various religious information sources online. I can read the Quran online, listen to lectures by renowned scholars, or even learn about the interpretation of the Quran and hadith through videos and e-learning platforms. All of this provides convenience for me in deepening my religious knowledge in a more structured manner."

"Additionally, digital literacy skill also helps me interact with a broader Muslim community. I can join online discussion forums, share experiences and religious understanding with fellow Muslims from around the world. This provides opportunities for mutual learning and broadening my Islamic perspective."

"Overall, Ngaji Literasi Digital provides significant benefits for me. The combination of religion and digital technology opens doors to a deeper understanding of religion, expands the network of the Muslim community, and presents enjoyable religious learning experiences. I feel very fortunate to experience the positive impact of this program."

Interviewer: "Alhamdulillah. What about your thoughts, Fitri?"

Fitri: "Alright, in my opinion, as a female student at an Islamic boarding school, Ngaji Literasi Digital has a very meaningful impact. As a woman, I feel that digital literacy has opened doors of opportunity and provided independence in acquiring religious knowledge."

"Through Ngaji Literasi Digital, I can access various online learning resources about religion. As a student at a boarding school, limited study time is a challenge. However, with digital literacy, I can

utilize spare time between activities at the boarding school to study the teachings of Islam more deeply."

"Furthermore, digital literacy also gives me the opportunity to learn in a more interactive way. I can participate in online lectures and discussions organized by renowned scholars. In these discussions, I can ask questions directly or share thoughts with other participants. This provides an active learning experience and develops critical thinking skills."

"Ngaji Literasi Digital also gives me the chance to learn from inspiring Muslim women figures. I can attend webinars, read books, or watch videos about Muslim women who have made extraordinary contributions to the field of religion. This provides motivation and strengthens my identity as a potential Muslim woman to develop myself and contribute to society."

"Overall, Ngaji Literasi Digital provides significant benefits for me as a student at a religious boarding school. Through digital literacy, I can learn flexibly, interact with Muslim scholars and communities, and experience enjoyable learning. I feel inspired and supported in developing my understanding of religion through the presence of Ngaji Literasi Digital."

Interviewer: "Alhamdulillah, it's great to hear that. Thank you for participating in this interview, Ahmad and Fitri."

The interviews with Ahmad and Fitri provided insight into the significant advantages of Ngaji Literasi Digital for kids attending Islamic boarding schools. We can deduce a number of important interpretations and conclusions through their points of view.

First of all, Ngaji Literasi Digital offers accessibility and ease, as both Ahmad and Fitri emphasize. The lectures and interpretations are just a few of the online materials that may be easily accessed thanks to the convergence of modern technologies and religious study. This accessibility makes it easier to learn and increase one's comprehension of religious knowledge in a more focused and directed manner.

Secondly, the interviews also stress the value of networking and participating in the community. Through Ngaji Literasi Digital, students can interact with a larger Muslim community. Online forums and discussions make it possible for members to share their experiences, ideas, and insights with one another, establishing a sense of community and supporting reciprocal learning. This element of digital literacy promotes cooperation and teamwork among the larger Islamic community.

The interviews also highlight how internet platforms help female students in Islamic boarding schools gain more authority. The chances offered by Ngaji Literasi Digital for female students to access knowledge, participate in interactive debates, and learn from role models who are motivating Muslim women are highlighted from Fitri's perspective. This component of digital literacy boosts female students' self-esteem and empowerment, motivating them to actively engage in and contribute to the larger Islamic debate.

Finally, both interviews highlight how entertaining and engaging Ngaji Literasi Digital is. A more dynamic and entertaining learning experience is made possible by the availability of imaginative and educational information in a variety of media, including films, articles, and interactive quizzes. This element of digital literacy encourages long-term motivation and enthusiasm in religious studies, encouraging and energizing students' study.

In conclusion, the interviews with Ahmad and Fitri shed important light on how Ngaji Literasi Digital affects pupils in Islamic boarding schools. Accessibility,

community participation, student empowerment for females, and a fun learning experience are all provided by the integration of digital technologies with religious studies. According to these results, Ngaji Literasi Digital is extremely important in helping students develop their digital literacy abilities and gain a more in-depth appreciation for and understanding of Islam. This paper emphasizes and strengthen the previous study about how important it is to include digital literacy into Islamic boarding schools' curricula in order to provide students the power and tools they need to succeed in the digital age.

Discussion

The implementation of digital literacy programs in Islamic boarding schools represents a significant change in their approach to education. These schools have a long-standing tradition of providing a religious and moral education to their students, with a focus on memorization of religious texts and values. However, in recent years, there has been a growing recognition among Islamic scholars and educators that they must adapt to changing times in order to survive and effectively spread Islamic values to the wider audience (Afriliandhi et al., 2022).

This adaptation can be seen in the way that Islamic boarding schools have begun to incorporate digital literacy programs, such as Ngaji Literasi Digital, into their concern. This program recognizes the need for students to acquire digital skills in order to navigate the digital world and use technology in a way that aligns with Islamic values. By doing so, these schools are embracing change and adapting to the demands of the modern world (Mimin Sundari Nasution et al., 2021).

The importance of this change can be traced back to the concept of "ijtihad" in Islamic jurisprudence. This concept refers to the process of independent reasoning, whereby Islamic scholars interpret the Qur'an and Hadith to address new and evolving challenges. This concept emphasizes the need for adaptation and innovation in order to keep up with changing times, while still staying true to Islamic values.

Moreover, this adaptation to change is also in line with the famous concept from Islamic boarding school environtment:

المُحَافَظَة عَلَى القَدِيْم الصَالِح وَالأَخْذُ بِالجَدِيْدِ الأَصْلَح

which roughly translates to: preserving what is good from the past and adopting what is better from the new. This phrase emphasizes the importance of balancing tradition with innovation. It suggests that one should value and preserve the positive aspects of history and culture, while also being open to new ideas and improvements that can benefit others.

Preserving what is good from the past means recognizing and cherishing the positive elements of traditional heritage, including cultural traditions, values, and practices. These are aspects that have stood the test of time and continue to bring value and meaning to the lives. Adopting what is better from the new means being receptive to new ideas and innovations that can help others improve and progress. This includes embracing advancements in technology, science, and other fields that can enhance the quality of life and make the Islamic boarding school more resilience than before (Azizah et al., 2021).

Overall, this concept encourages the students of Islamic boarding school to strike a balance between preserving our cultural identity and heritage and adapting to

the changing world around us. By doing so, it will be possible to create a more sustainable and prosperous future for future generations.

Conclusion

This paper has explored the impact of Ngaji Literasi Digital program in empowering Islamic boarding school students in Indonesia. Through descriptive qualitative research design, data was collected from 60 students, which consisted of 30 boys and 30 girls. The data was analyzed through observation, focusing on the students' ability in digital literacy and the impact of the Ngaji Literasi Digital program on their skills. The findings of this study suggest that not all students are familiar with digital literacy, but they are enthusiastic about learning the skills due to their realization of its importance. Moreover, the second finding suggests that Islamic boarding schools are adapting to change to survive and spread Islamic values to a wider audience. Digital literacy is a crucial aspect of this change as it enables individuals to navigate and utilize technology effectively. The collaboration between the Islamic boarding schools and Siber Kreasi in implementing the Ngaji Literasi Digital program exemplifies this adaptation to change. The discussion section of this paper highlights the significance of digital literacy skills in the current era, where technology plays a central role in everyday life.

Theoretical perspectives from experts in the field emphasize the importance of digital literacy skills for personal development and participation in society. Additionally, the discussion addresses the role of Islamic boarding schools in promoting Islamic values through the integration of technology. Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that Ngaji Literasi Digital program has a siginificant impact on the digital literacy skills of Islamic boarding school students. The collaboration between the Islamic boarding schools and Siber Kreasi represents a step towards the integration of technology in promoting Islamic values. This study contributes to the current understanding of the importance of digital literacy skills and the role of Islamic boarding schools in promoting them.

In conclusion, this paper demonstrates the importance of programs such as Ngaji Literasi Digital in promoting digital literacy skills among Islamic boarding school students. The findings of this study suggest that the program has a positive impact on students' ability to navigate and utilize technology effectively. Additionally, this study highlights the significance of adapting to change in order to survive and spread Islamic values in a modern context. Theoretical perspectives from experts in the field provide further support for the importance of digital literacy skills in personal development and participation in society. Overall, this study contributes to the current understanding of the role of Islamic boarding schools in promoting digital literacy skills and adapting to change in a modern context.

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