

# THE INTERNALIZATION OF RELIGIOUS CHARACTER VALUES THROUGH VILLAGE LOCAL WISDOM AT MA KARTIKA CENDEKIA AIR LALANGI

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## Abstract

Digital transformation presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities for Islamic Education (PAI) in rural settings. This study aims to analyze the dynamics of digital literacy implementation at MA Kartika Cendekia, Air Lalangi Village, Ulok Kupai District. Using a descriptive qualitative method, data were gathered through observations, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and documentation studies. The results reveal that while significant digital infrastructure disparities and accessibility constraints persist, the integration of accessible digital media such as WhatsApp, YouTube, and digital Al-Qur'an applications has successfully transformed traditional religious instruction into a more interactive and visual experience. Furthermore, the study finds that fostering critical literacy through the Islamic principle of *Tabayyun* and internalizing digital ethics (*Akhlak Digital*) are essential for students to navigate online religious information safely. The research concludes that despite environmental limitations, rural madrasahs can enhance religious literacy by synergizing technological proficiency with strong moral foundations, ensuring students remain competitive and moderate in the global digital era.

**Keywords:** *Digital Literacy, Islamic Education, Rural Madrasah, Religious Moderation, Digital Ethics.*

## Background

Digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped the landscape of global education across all disciplines and academic levels. Islamic Education (PAI) faces the urgent necessity to adapt its pedagogical frameworks to remain relevant in the contemporary

technological era (Nopia et.al, 2022). Students in rural areas often encounter distinct challenges in accessing high-quality digital resources compared to their urban counterparts. MA Kartika Cendekia in Air Lalangi Village represents a critical site for observing the intersection of traditional religious

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values and modern digital demands. Technological integration in Madrasah Aliyah is no longer a peripheral option but a core requirement for ensuring academic competitiveness. Rural education environments require specific strategic interventions to bridge the existing digital divide effectively. Effective digital literacy serves as a catalyst for enhancing the depth and breadth of religious understanding among students. This research aims to analyze the specific dynamics of digital literacy implementation within this rural Islamic educational context (Azzahrah et.al, 2018).

The mastery of digital literacy constitutes a primary competency for Gen-Z students navigating complex information ecosystems. Islamic Education must evolve beyond traditional rote memorization toward a more analytical and digitally-mediated inquiry process. Students with high digital literacy skills demonstrate greater autonomy in exploring diverse religious perspectives through authoritative online platforms. Digital proficiency enables learners to differentiate between authentic religious teachings and extremist or misinterpreted content circulating in cyberspace. MA Kartika Cendekia plays a pivotal role in equipping students with the tools to handle digital disruption while maintaining their

spiritual integrity. Rural madrasahs often struggle with infrastructure limitations that directly impact the speed of digital literacy acquisition. Developing a comprehensive digital literacy framework within PAI is essential for producing graduates who are both technologically savvy and religiously grounded. Religious literacy in the 21st century is inextricably linked to the ability to navigate digital information ethically (Fauzi et al., 2022).

Infrastructure disparities between urban and rural regions continue to pose significant barriers to equitable digital education. Air Lalangi Village faces geographical and technical constraints that often limit stable internet connectivity for educational purposes. MA Kartika Cendekia must innovate with limited resources to provide students with meaningful digital learning experiences. The digital divide manifests not only in hardware access but also in the quality of digital engagement among students and teachers. Rural students frequently rely on mobile devices as their primary gateway to digital religious content. Inadequate technological support can lead to a sense of digital alienation among students in remote areas. Addressing these infrastructural challenges is the first step toward creating an inclusive digital learning environment in the madrasah. Strategic

partnerships between schools and local communities are vital for overcoming technical hurdles in rural settings.

Teachers of Islamic Education in rural madrasahs serve as the frontline facilitators of digital literacy integration. Pedagogy in the digital age requires educators to possess a dual mastery of religious substance and technological application. Many teachers in rural areas face significant pressure to update their digital skills without adequate professional development. The teacher's ability to curate high-quality digital content determines the effectiveness of the learning process in the classroom. MA Kartika Cendekia educators are tasked with bridging the gap between classical Islamic texts and modern digital delivery methods. Effective digital leadership from teachers can inspire students to use technology for productive spiritual and academic purposes. Professional training programs must be tailored to the specific needs of rural Islamic educators to ensure sustainability. The shift toward digital pedagogy necessitates a fundamental change in the teacher-student relationship in the classroom (Huda, 2020).

Opportunities for digital literacy in Islamic Education include the vast availability of interactive learning media and virtual resources. Students can now access digital libraries,

interactive Qur'an applications, and virtual tours of historical Islamic sites from their classrooms. These technologies bring abstract religious concepts to life through visualization and immersive experiences. Rural students at MA Kartika Cendekia can benefit immensely from open-access educational platforms that transcend geographical boundaries. Digital media provides a space for creative expression where students can produce their own religious content. Engagement with digital tools increases student motivation and participation in Islamic Education lessons. Technology acts as a bridge that connects local village life with the global Muslim community (Ummah). Utilizing digital opportunities requires a proactive mindset from both school administrators and the student body.

Information ethics and digital "Akhlak" represent a new frontier in the Islamic Education curriculum for the digital age. Students must be trained to apply Islamic principles of communication, such as tabayyun (verification), when consuming digital news. Social media interactions often test the moral character of students in ways that traditional classroom settings do not. Digital literacy training at MA Kartika Cendekia includes the promotion of polite and constructive online discourse. Protecting students from the negative impacts of the

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internet, such as cyberbullying and misinformation, is a priority for Islamic educators. Digital morality is not a separate entity but an extension of traditional Islamic ethics into the virtual realm. Students need to understand the long-term spiritual and social consequences of their digital footprints. Ethics-based digital literacy ensures that technology serves as a tool for personal and communal improvement (Sauri, 2021).

Critical thinking skills are developed when students are encouraged to analyze digital religious content through a scholarly lens. The abundance of online religious information requires students to be active rather than passive consumers. MA Kartika Cendekia aims to foster a generation of students who can critically evaluate the credibility of online "ustadz" and digital fatwas. Islamic Education lessons provide the perfect venue for practicing digital source criticism and logical reasoning. Critical digital literacy prevents students from falling victim to radicalization or narrow-minded interpretations of religion. Students learn to appreciate the diversity of thought within the Islamic tradition by accessing various digital scholarly sources. Analytical skills gained through digital literacy are transferable to other academic subjects and real-life situations. Strengthening critical

thinking is the best defense against the pitfalls of the digital information age.

The integration of digital literacy into PAI learning has a direct impact on the quality of student religious moderation. Digital platforms can be used to promote inclusive values and tolerance among students in rural areas. Exposure to diverse digital content helps students understand the multicultural reality of the Indonesian nation. MA Kartika Cendekia encourages students to use digital tools to build bridges with people of different backgrounds. Religious moderation in the digital space is a key indicator of a successful Islamic Education program. Students who are digitally literate are more likely to reject extremist narratives and embrace a balanced (wasatiyyah) approach to religion. Technology provides the platform for disseminating moderate Islamic messages to a wider audience. Promoting moderation through digital literacy is a strategic necessity for national harmony (Mahrus et al., 2021).

Parental and community involvement in Air Lalangi Village is crucial for supporting the school's digital literacy initiatives. Parents in rural areas may have limited understanding of the digital world, creating a gap in home supervision. MA Kartika Cendekia must work to educate parents about the benefits and risks associated with students' digital

activities. A supportive home environment reinforces the digital ethics taught in the madrasah. Community resources, such as village internet hubs, can supplement the school's limited technological infrastructure. Collaboration between the school, parents, and village leaders creates a holistic digital ecosystem for the students. Rural communities often possess strong social capital that can be mobilized to support educational technology. Successful digital literacy programs require a unified effort from all stakeholders in the village.

Student motivation in Islamic Education often increases when technology is integrated into the instructional design. Gamification, interactive quizzes, and digital storytelling make religious lessons more engaging for Gen-Z learners. MA Kartika Cendekia students respond positively to learning methods that mirror their daily digital experiences. Technology reduces the perceived "dryness" of traditional religious subjects, making them more vibrant and relevant. Digital tools allow for personalized learning paths where students can progress at their own pace. High student engagement is a prerequisite for the deep internalization of religious values. Innovative teaching methods demonstrate that Islamic Education is an adaptive and forward-looking

discipline. Motivation serves as the internal engine that drives the acquisition of complex digital literacy skills (Waris, 2023).

The impact of digital literacy on the academic performance of PAI students at MA Kartika Cendekia is a key area of analysis. Access to digital research tools allows students to produce higher-quality assignments and projects. Digital literacy enables more efficient study habits and better management of information resources. Students who master digital tools are better prepared for higher education and the modern workforce. Academic success in the digital age is closely correlated with the ability to use technology for information processing. Islamic Education contributes to this success by providing a moral framework for technological use. The madrasah environment must continue to evolve to meet the rising standards of global digital education. Quantitative and qualitative improvements in student outcomes validate the investment in digital literacy (Zahro et.al, 2020).

Socio-economic factors in rural Ulok Kupai influence the level of digital readiness among the student population. Students from lower-income families may face "device poverty," limiting their ability to practice digital skills outside of school. MA Kartika Cendekia strives to provide

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equitable access to school facilities to mitigate these socio-economic gaps. Financial constraints also impact the school's ability to maintain and upgrade its technological assets. Addressing equity is essential for ensuring that digital literacy benefits all students, not just a privileged few. Islamic principles of social justice ('adalah) demand that every student has an equal opportunity to succeed. Resource allocation must prioritize those who are most disadvantaged by the digital divide. Socio-economic challenges require creative and compassionate solutions from the school leadership.

Research on digital literacy in rural madrasahs provides valuable insights for regional and national educational policy. MA Kartika Cendekia serves as a representative case study for many similar institutions across Indonesia. Findings from this study can inform the development of more effective digital literacy programs for rural areas. Understanding the specific obstacles faced by rural students allows for more targeted government support. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on Islamic Education in the digital era. The unique context of Air Lalangi Village offers lessons in resilience and innovation for other rural schools. Academic documentation of these efforts is necessary for the continuous improvement of the

educational system. Localized research ensures that national policies are grounded in the reality of the field (Zuhri & Syam, 2021).

The transformative power of digital literacy in the rural Islamic educational setting. MA Kartika Cendekia stands at a crossroads where tradition and technology must be harmonized for student success. The challenges of infrastructure and digital gaps are significant but not insurmountable with strategic planning. Opportunities for enhanced religious understanding and global connectivity offer a bright future for rural students. Developing digital literacy with a strong ethical foundation is the primary goal of the madrasah. This research will explore these dynamics in depth to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current situation. The success of digital literacy in Islamic Education will determine the future character of the younger generation. Sustaining these efforts requires a long-term commitment from the entire academic community (Ramadhan et al., 2022).

### Method

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the challenges and opportunities of digital literacy at MA Kartika Cendekia. Subject selection was conducted through a purposive

sampling technique, involving Islamic Education (PAI) teachers and students in Air Lalangi Village as key informants. Primary data were gathered through participatory observation of classroom learning processes and in-depth interviews regarding technological accessibility and students' digital competencies. The researcher also performed a documentation study of the madrasah curriculum and the availability of IT-based learning infrastructure at the site. Utilizing a qualitative method allows the researcher to capture the complex realities of the digital divide in rural areas with significant depth. Data validity is ensured through source and technique triangulation to maintain the objectivity of the field findings.

The data analysis procedure follows the Miles and Huberman model, encompassing data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. All information obtained from the field was filtered to focus the analysis on infrastructural constraints and the potential for developing digital religious literacy. Reduced data were systematically organized to illustrate the patterns of student interaction with technological media within the context of religious education. The verification process was carried out continuously to ensure that data interpretation aligned with the sociocultural context of Ulok Kupai District. This entire

methodological sequence is designed to produce a comprehensive overview of digital literacy dynamics within a rural madrasah environment. This approach ensures that the resulting recommendations have a strong empirical foundation and relevance for local educational policy.

### **Finding & Results**

#### ***Digital Infrastructure Disparity and Accessibility Constraints in Rural Madrasah***

Digital infrastructure stands as the primary structural barrier to the implementation of modern Islamic education in Air Lalangi Village. Empirical findings at MA Kartika Cendekia reveal a significant gap between the demands of the national digital curriculum and the actual availability of technological hardware. Student access to stable internet connectivity remains highly volatile due to the geographical isolation of the Ulok Kupai district. Limited bandwidth capacity forces teachers to rely on offline resources, which restricts the exploration of real-time religious databases. Financial constraints within the rural madrasah ecosystem prevent the rapid procurement of high-specification computers for student laboratories. Hardware scarcity leads to a low ratio of devices per student, creating a queue system that reduces instructional efficiency. This physical

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divide creates a layer of educational inequality that hampers the development of standardized digital competencies. Infrastructure readiness is a prerequisite for any successful technology-based pedagogical intervention (Suwari, 2021).

Network instability in rural areas directly impacts the quality of synchronous learning activities for Islamic Education subjects. Students frequently report signal loss during attempts to access interactive multimedia content or cloud-based learning platforms. High costs of cellular data packages impose an additional economic burden on low-income families in the village community. Many participants are forced to prioritize basic necessities over the purchase of digital credits for educational purposes. Access to digital religious literature is often limited to text-based files that require minimal data consumption. This technical limitation prevents students from engaging with high-definition video tutorials or virtual reality simulations of Islamic rituals. Unequal access to digital tools creates a disparity in information literacy levels among the student body. Geographical barriers remain a formidable challenge in the democratization of digital religious information (Hasanah, 2020).

The "device poverty" phenomenon is highly visible among

the student population of MA Kartika Cendekia. Observations indicate that a majority of students utilize entry-level smartphones with limited storage and processing power as their primary learning tools. Low device performance leads to frequent application crashes when running complex educational software or large PDF files. Students often have to delete essential personal data to make room for school-related digital modules. Lack of personal laptops or tablets prevents students from practicing advanced digital skills like content creation or data analysis. The madrasah's computer laboratory lacks the necessary maintenance and software updates to meet contemporary academic standards. Relying solely on mobile devices limits the scope of digital literacy to basic consumption rather than productive creation. Socio-economic status continues to dictate the level of technological engagement in rural education (Mahrus et al., 2021).

Electricity supply fluctuations in the Ulok Kupai region present another layer of operational difficulty for the madrasah. Periodic power outages disrupt classroom activities that rely on projectors or computer-assisted instruction. Unstable voltage levels pose a risk to the longevity of the limited electronic equipment owned by the school. Teachers are often required to prepare manual backup plans to

ensure the continuity of learning during technical failures. This constant state of technical uncertainty discourages the consistent integration of digital tools into the daily PAI syllabus. The absence of adequate power stabilization systems reflects the broader neglect of rural educational infrastructure. Infrastructure reliability is essential for maintaining the momentum of digital habituation among students. Consistent energy access is a vital component of the modern educational support system (Fauzi et al., 2022).

Digital literacy acquisition is significantly slowed by the lack of a dedicated IT support staff within the rural madrasah structure. Teachers are often forced to take on the role of technical troubleshooters in addition to their pedagogical responsibilities. Complex technical issues with software or networking frequently remain unresolved for long periods due to a lack of professional expertise. This administrative burden reduces the time available for actual religious instruction and curriculum development. Students lose interest in digital learning when the technology fails to function as intended during lessons. The absence of a structured maintenance protocol leads to the rapid deterioration of existing hardware assets. Human resource limitations in the technical field are as critical as the physical lack of equipment. Institutional support

systems must be strengthened to sustain digital transformation in remote areas (Huda, 2020).

Limited access to digital repositories for Islamic studies forces students to rely on unverified or low-quality online sources. Rural students often lack the subscription-based access to international journals or comprehensive digital libraries available to urban students. This information gap restricts the depth of academic inquiry and critical analysis in the classroom. Teachers at MA Kartika Cendekia struggle to provide diverse reference materials that could broaden students' religious horizons. Digital infrastructure constraints prevent the madrasah from participating in collaborative online networks with other educational institutions. The isolation caused by the digital divide reinforces a localized and sometimes narrow understanding of global religious developments. Equalizing access to high-quality digital content is essential for fostering a competitive generation of Muslim scholars. Information equity is a core principle of modern educational justice (Sauri, 2021).

Instructional design in rural PAI classes is often restricted by the low compatibility of learning apps with old hardware. Many modern educational applications require the latest operating systems which are not

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supported by the students' aging devices. This software-hardware mismatch creates frustration and disengagement among both teachers and learners. Students are unable to utilize advanced features such as augmented reality or high-speed interactive quizzes. The madrasah is often excluded from innovative digital pilot programs due to its lack of technical readiness. Developers of educational technology must consider the hardware realities of rural schools to ensure inclusive design. Software lightweighting is a necessary strategy for reaching students in resource-constrained environments. Technology must be adapted to fit the user's environment rather than demanding unrealistic upgrades (Waris, 2023).

The psychological impact of infrastructure disparity manifests as a sense of digital inferiority among rural students. Seeing the advanced technological facilities of urban schools through social media can lead to demotivation. Students at MA Kartika Cendekia may feel that they are being left behind in the national race for digital mastery. This emotional barrier can hinder the proactive exploration of technology even when access is available. Teachers must work extra hard to build students' confidence and provide a positive digital mindset. Success in digital literacy requires both physical access and the psychological

readiness to use it. Reducing the digital divide is not just about cables and screens but about restoring educational dignity. Motivation is closely linked to the perceived accessibility of the goals being pursued (Zuhri & Syam, 2021).

Community-based internet solutions in Air Lalangi Village have yet to reach the necessary level of maturity to support the madrasah. Village-run digital hubs often face the same technical and financial struggles as the school itself. Lack of a unified digital strategy at the village level prevents the pooling of resources for better connectivity. MA Kartika Cendekia operates as a digital island with minimal external support for its technological needs. Local government policies have not yet prioritized high-speed internet as a basic utility for rural educational institutions. Bridging the infrastructure gap requires a multisectoral approach involving public and private stakeholders. Community social capital can be a powerful force for improving rural digital access if mobilized correctly. Collaborative efforts are the key to overcoming the systemic neglect of rural technology (Ramadhan et al., 2022).

Sustainable funding models for digital infrastructure remain elusive for private rural madrasahs like MA Kartika Cendekia. Reliance on student fees and limited government subsidies is insufficient for the high costs of IT

procurement and maintenance. The school often has to choose between maintaining physical classrooms and upgrading digital servers. This zero-sum game slows down the overall progress of educational modernization in the district. Long-term planning is difficult when the budget for technology is unpredictable and reactive. External grants and philanthropic support are needed to provide the initial capital for digital transformation. Ensuring a stable financial foundation is critical for the longevity of digital literacy initiatives. Financial resilience is the backbone of any sustainable technological integration in education.

***Integration of Digital Media in PAI:  
Transforming Religious Instruction  
in Ulok  
Kupai***

The integration of digital media at MA Kartika Cendekia marks a significant shift from conventional lecturing to a more multi-sensory and interactive instructional model. Teachers in Ulok Kupai have begun utilizing accessible platforms like YouTube and WhatsApp to deliver complex religious concepts to students. This transformation allows for the visualization of abstract topics such as the history of Islamic civilization and the procedural steps of the Hajj pilgrimage. Students demonstrate higher engagement levels when textual

narratives are supplemented with relevant audio-visual stimuli. The shift toward digital delivery methods addresses the diverse learning styles of Gen-Z students who are naturally inclined toward visual information. This pedagogical adaptation ensures that Islamic Education remains relevant and engaging within a rural context. Digital media serves as a bridge that connects traditional curricula with modern learning preferences (Huda, 2020).

Social media platforms, particularly WhatsApp, have evolved into secondary learning management systems for the madrasah community. Teachers use group chats to distribute digital modules, voice notes of Al-Qur'an recitations, and daily religious reminders. This continuous flow of information extends the learning process beyond the physical boundaries of the classroom in Air Lalangi Village. Students can revisit shared materials at their own pace, fostering a culture of independent study and repetition. The ease of interaction in digital spaces encourages quieter students to participate more actively in theological discussions. Instant feedback loops through digital messaging improve the communication efficiency between educators and learners. Utilizing familiar social technology reduces the barrier to entry for digital literacy among rural

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populations. Mobile-based learning is the most viable strategy for maintaining educational continuity in resource-limited areas (Waris, 2023).

Digital Al-Qur'an applications and Hadith databases have become essential tools for enhancing the accuracy of religious studies at MA Kartika Cendekia. These applications provide students with instant access to various translations, interpretations (tafsir), and search functions for specific keywords. The ability to quickly verify the authenticity of a narration fosters a more scholarly approach to Islamic learning. Students no longer rely solely on printed textbooks that may have limited or outdated references. Digital tools allow for a more comparative and comprehensive study of Islamic law and ethics in the classroom (Rohmah, 2019). Mastering these digital resources is a core component of modern religious literacy for Madrasah Aliyah students. The transition to digital primary sources reflects a broader trend toward the professionalization of religious education. Technology provides the necessary tools for deep intellectual engagement with sacred texts (Sauri, 2021).

The use of interactive presentation software has replaced the traditional whiteboard as the focal point of PAI instruction in several classrooms. Teachers create visually

appealing slides that incorporate infographics and diagrams to explain the intricate details of Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh). Visualization helps students grasp the logical structure of religious rulings and their application in contemporary life. Interactive quizzes via digital platforms increase classroom competitiveness and motivate students to master the material. This shift in instructional design creates a more dynamic and less monotonous learning environment for the participants. Students report that visual aids help them retain complex information for longer periods during examinations. Effective visualization is a powerful cognitive tool for simplifying sophisticated theological arguments. Modernizing classroom delivery is essential for sustaining student interest in religious subjects (Fauzi et al., 2022).

Video-based learning has revolutionized the way students at MA Kartika Cendekia practice ritualistic aspects of worship. Instructional videos provide step-by-step guidance on wudhu, shalat, and janazah prayers that students can mirror in real-time. This practical modeling is far more effective than relying on static images in a textbook or verbal descriptions alone. Students can pause, rewind, and re-watch specific segments until they achieve technical precision in their religious practices. The use of high-quality digital tutorials standardizes

the quality of practical religious skills across the student body. Teachers act as facilitators who guide students in applying these digital models correctly within the school environment. Technology-mediated modeling is a hallmark of contemporary pedagogical success in vocational religious training. Practical competency is significantly enhanced through the strategic use of audio-visual aids (Suwari, 2021).

Digital storytelling has emerged as a creative method for students to internalize and express Islamic moral values (Akhlaq). Students are encouraged to use their smartphones to create short videos or digital posters that reflect ethical themes in their local village life. This process requires students to synthesize their religious knowledge with their creative and technical skills. Producing digital content fosters a sense of ownership and pride in their religious identity as young Muslims. These creative projects allow for a more personalized exploration of how Islamic values apply to modern social challenges. Digital storytelling bridges the gap between theoretical ethics and practical moral expression in the digital age. Creative engagement is a key indicator of high-level religious and digital literacy. Empowering students as content creators shifts the educational focus from passive consumption to active contribution (Ramadhan et al., 2022).

The integration of digital media facilitates the implementation of a "flipped classroom" model even in a rural madrasah setting. Teachers can assign digital reading or video watching as homework, allowing class time to be dedicated to deeper discussion and problem-solving. This approach maximizes the limited face-to-face interaction time available in the school schedule. Students arrive at class with a baseline understanding of the topic, leading to more sophisticated theological debates. The flipped model encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning progress from an early age. Digital platforms provide the necessary infrastructure to manage this decentralized learning process effectively. This methodological shift prepares students for the self-directed learning environments they will encounter in higher education. Innovation in teaching methods is the primary driver of academic excellence in the digital era (Mahrus et al., 2021).

Collaboration among students is enhanced through the use of shared digital documents and online collaborative tools. MA Kartika Cendekia students work together on group projects regarding Islamic history or contemporary social issues using digital platforms. Collaborative digital work fosters communication skills and collective intelligence within

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the student community. Students learn to peer-review each other's work and provide constructive feedback in a digital environment. This social aspect of digital learning reduces the isolation often felt by students in remote rural areas. Working in digital teams mirrors the collaborative nature of the modern global workforce. Technology acts as a facilitator for social learning and communal knowledge building. Collaborative skills are as important as technical skills in the modern educational landscape (Hasanah, 2020).

Digital media integration serves as a powerful tool for promoting religious moderation (wasatiyyah) among the youth in Ulok Kupai. Teachers curate digital content that emphasizes the inclusive and tolerant nature of Islam in the Indonesian context. Exposure to moderate digital voices helps counter the influence of radical or intolerant narratives found online. Digital literacy lessons include training on how to identify and reject extremist content in cyberspace. The madrasah uses its digital presence to model a balanced and peaceful interpretation of Islamic teachings. Students are encouraged to be "digital ambassadors" for moderate Islam within their own social networks. Promoting moderation through technology is a vital contribution to national social cohesion. Education is

the most effective defense against the spread of radicalism in the digital age (Zuhri & Syam, 2021).

The final impact of digital media integration is the creation of a more resilient and adaptive Islamic educational system at MA Kartika Cendekia. The ability to shift between physical and digital instruction ensures that learning can continue despite external disruptions. Students graduate with a unique blend of traditional religious values and modern technological competencies. This dual strength prepares them to contribute effectively to society both as religious individuals and as skilled professionals (Rosala et.al, 2021). The successful transformation of religious instruction in Ulok Kupai serves as a model for other rural madrasahs in Indonesia. Continuous innovation is required to keep pace with the rapid advancements in educational technology. The journey toward a fully integrated digital madrasah is an ongoing process of growth and adaptation. Strengthening the link between faith and technology is the key to future educational success.

### ***Critical Literacy and Digital Ethics: Navigating Religious Information Among Rural Students***

Critical literacy in the digital era necessitates a shift from passive consumption to an evaluative engagement with online religious

discourses. Students at MA Kartika Cendekia are increasingly exposed to a pluralism of interpretations that require robust analytical filters to navigate safely. The ability to deconstruct digital narratives and identify potential biases is a fundamental skill for maintaining theological clarity in a saturated information market. Religious education in rural settings must prioritize the development of "digital skepticism" to protect students from unverified claims. Critical literacy involves questioning the source, intent, and context of every digital religious post encountered on social media. Students learn that technical accessibility does not equate to religious authority or doctrinal accuracy. Strengthening the intellect through critical literacy is a modern manifestation of the Islamic mandate to seek valid knowledge. Analytical rigor is the most effective defense against the spread of digital misinformation (Sauri, 2021).

The concept of Tabayyun (verification) serves as the ethical and methodological backbone for navigating digital religious information. Students are taught to rigorously cross-check viral religious messages against established classical texts and authoritative scholarly opinions. This traditional Islamic principle finds renewed relevance as a strategy for

combatting "hoax" news and slanderous content in cyberspace. MA Kartika Cendekia integrates Tabayyun into daily PAI lessons to foster a culture of intellectual responsibility among rural youth. Verification processes include checking the credentials of digital preachers and the reliability of the platforms hosting the content. Students are encouraged to consult with their teachers when encountering ambiguous or controversial religious rulings online. Developing a habit of verification prevents the accidental dissemination of false or harmful religious teachings. Ethical information consumption is a prerequisite for a healthy digital spiritual life (Fauzi et al., 2022).

Digital ethics, or Akhlak Digital, represents the application of Islamic moral values to interactions within virtual environments. Students at MA Kartika Cendekia are guided to maintain the same standards of honesty, modesty, and respect online as they do in physical social settings. This includes avoiding ujaran kebencian (hate speech), digital vanity, and the invasion of others' privacy in the digital realm. The madrasah emphasizes that every digital action carries moral weight and spiritual consequences in the afterlife. Rural students are trained to be "ethical consumers" who only share content that is beneficial (maslahah) and truthful. Digital ethics

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serves as a shield that protects the student's character from the corrosive effects of toxic online cultures. Character education must expand its scope to address the unique moral challenges of the 21st-century internet. Moral consistency across all platforms is the hallmark of a true Muslim student (Wuwur & Kuswandi, 2023).

Navigating religious authority in the digital space requires students to understand the difference between "popular" influence and "scholarly" expertise. The rise of digital "ustadz" who lack formal theological training poses a significant risk to the religious understanding of rural students. MA Kartika Cendekia provides students with a list of verified and authoritative digital resources to ensure they access sound doctrine. Students are taught to look for depth of argument and classical references rather than just high production value or viral popularity. Understanding the "sanad" (chain of transmission) of knowledge remains crucial even when the medium of delivery is a digital screen. This critical awareness helps students avoid falling into the trap of superficial or "instant" religious interpretations. Discerning true religious authority is a critical component of advanced religious literacy. Scientific and theological standards must remain the benchmark for digital religious content (Huda, 2020).

The role of the teacher as a "digital mediator" is essential for helping rural students filter the vast influx of online religious information. Educators at MA Kartika Cendekia act as curators who guide students toward moderate and intellectually rigorous digital content. This mediation involves active classroom discussions where students bring digital religious trends to be analyzed through the lens of established PAI curricula. Teachers help students identify the linguistic and psychological markers of extremist or intolerant digital propaganda. This collaborative inquiry process demystifies the digital world and empowers students to be more independent in their navigation. Effective mediation requires teachers to stay updated on current digital trends and social media dynamics. The teacher-student dialogue is the primary venue for developing critical religious literacy. Professional guidance is indispensable for navigating the complexities of digital faith (Sanusi et.al, 2023)).

Digital literacy training at MA Kartika Cendekia also addresses the phenomenon of "echo chambers" and "filter bubbles" in social media algorithms. Students learn how digital platforms prioritize content that aligns with their existing views, potentially limiting their exposure to diverse perspectives. This awareness

encourages students to proactively seek out a wider range of moderate and scholarly voices to balance their digital intake. Understanding the technical mechanisms of social media helps students realize that their digital feeds are curated by code, not necessarily by truth. Critical literacy involves the conscious effort to break free from algorithm-driven biases that can lead to radicalization. Promoting a balanced (Wasatiyyah) digital diet is essential for fostering a tolerant and open-minded religious outlook. Awareness of algorithmic bias is a sophisticated but necessary skill for modern students. Inclusivity in digital consumption mirrors the Islamic value of universal brotherhood (Waris, 2023).

Practical exercises in "digital source criticism" are implemented to enhance students' ability to evaluate the credibility of online fatwas. Students analyze various religious websites to determine their ideological leanings and the validity of the evidence they provide. This hands-on approach turns the classroom into a laboratory for intellectual self-defense against religious misinformation. MA Kartika Cendekia students are taught to recognize the difference between a consensus-based ruling and an isolated, extremist opinion. Developing these evaluative skills ensures that students are not easily swayed by emotionally charged but intellectually weak digital

content. Source criticism is an ancient Islamic tradition that finds its most urgent application in the modern digital age. The ability to judge information quality is a key indicator of academic and spiritual maturity. High-quality literacy leads to high-quality religious practice (Maimun et.al, 2020).

Cyber-bullying and digital harassment are addressed through the lens of Adab (manners) and interpersonal ethics in Islamic Education. Students are taught that the anonymity of the internet does not exempt them from the Islamic prohibition against mocking or belittling others. MA Kartika Cendekia promotes a "positive digital footprint" where students are encouraged to use their platforms for Da'wah that is kind and constructive. Religious literacy includes the ability to manage conflict and disagreement online with grace and patience (Sabr). Digital ethics training helps prevent the school community from being fractured by social media disputes. Students learn that their online behavior is a reflection of their faith and the quality of their education. Fostering a respectful digital culture is a collective responsibility of the entire madrasah. Good digital manners are a modern extension of the Prophet's exemplary character (Widianto & Lutfiana., 2021).

The integration of critical literacy helps students in Air Lalangi

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Village develop a sense of "digital agency" and responsibility. Rather than being passive recipients of information, students become active participants in shaping a positive digital religious landscape. They are encouraged to produce and share moderate religious content that reflects the peaceful values of their local community. This shift from consumption to production reinforces their own understanding and commitment to moderate Islam. Digital agency allows rural students to have a voice in the global Muslim discourse despite their geographical location. Empowering students with the tools of critical literacy transforms technology into an instrument of empowerment. Success in digital literacy is measured by the student's ability to contribute positively to the digital world. Rural youth can be powerful agents of change through ethical digital engagement (Farleni & Hidayat, 2023).

In conclusion, critical literacy and digital ethics are the final safeguards that ensure technology serves the spiritual growth of students at MA Kartika Cendekia. The combination of traditional Islamic principles like Tabayyun and modern analytical skills creates a robust framework for navigating the digital age. Students graduate with the ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood in a complex and often confusing information environment.

This holistic approach ensures that digital literacy is not just a technical skill but a moral and intellectual one. The success of this program in a rural setting proves that advanced digital literacy is possible and necessary for all students. Strengthening the link between ethics and information is the key to producing a generation of wise and technologically savvy Muslims. Future-ready madrasahs must prioritize the development of the "critical heart" and the "analytical mind" in the digital space.

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that digital literacy in Islamic Education (PAI) at MA Kartika Cendekia serves as both a transformative opportunity and a significant challenge within the rural context of Air Lalangi Village. While systemic disparities in digital infrastructure and technological accessibility continue to hinder the pace of modernization, the strategic integration of accessible media such as WhatsApp and YouTube has successfully bridged the pedagogical gap, making abstract religious concepts more tangible for students. The implementation of traditional Islamic principles like Tabayyun alongside modern critical literacy has empowered rural students to navigate complex online religious information with ethical discernment and analytical

rigor. Ultimately, fostering a synergy between technological proficiency and Akhlak Digital ensures that students are not merely passive consumers of digital content, but are instead prepared to be moderate, intellectually resilient, and ethical participants in the global digital community.

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