



Use of Information Technology Media in Christian Counseling

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Abstract: This research examines the use of information technology media in Christian religious outreach in response to the rapid development of information technology and multimedia. In the context of religious outreach, the role of information technology media, such as the internet, mobile devices, and digital applications, is recognized as an effective means of communication and learning. This research uses the literature study method to investigate the definition of information technology media, its benefits, and the types of media that can be used in religious outreach. The results show that information technology is not only an integral part of the learning process, but also an effective tool for Christian religious extension. Media such as websites, podcasts, videos, mobile apps and others can be used to reach a wider audience and enrich the extension process. This research also illustrates the role of Christian religious extension workers in society, where they serve as lights who guide people to understand religion and create a harmonious social-spiritual life. The benefits of using information technology media include wider access to information, ease of communication, increased productivity, and more flexible learning opportunities. Types of information technology media that can be used in religious counseling include slide films, overhead projectors, pictures and photos, movies, podcasts and augmented reality (AR) media. Thus, this research provides a broader understanding of the utilization of information technology media in the context of Christian religious outreach.

Keywords: *Christian Religious Counseling, Information Technology Media, Literature Review, Benefits.*

INTRODUCTION

In an era where technology continues to evolve rapidly, religious outreach is no exception. This journal highlights the significant role of religion, particularly Christianity, which has a widespread following around the world. However, in today's rapid technological advancement, religious extension workers need to adapt their approach to the changing era. Extension workers should also be able to apply information technology before conducting extension activities so as to coordinate between science and technology that develops and benefits the target. Religious counseling is a form of education designed to develop an individual's understanding and spiritual life. Facing the challenges of the times, the role of information technology media can enrich the process of Christian religious counseling. Technological media, such as the internet, mobile devices, and various digital applications, have become powerful communication and learning tools.

Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia No. 80 of 2022 underscores the importance of the position of Religious Counselor with its duties in providing religious and developmental guidance. However, with the shift in technology, this journal highlights the need to integrate

technological media such as the internet, mobile devices, and digital applications into Christian religious counseling.¹

This journal attempts to answer key questions around the definition of technological media, the types of technological media that can be applied in religious outreach, and the benefits of their use. The aim is clear, to provide an in-depth understanding of the use of technological media in the context of Christian religious outreach. It is hoped that this journal will provide the latest insights in the field of Christian religious outreach, as well as provide practical guidance for Christian extension workers to utilize technological media in their tasks.

RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this research is qualitative research. Qualitative research method is a research technique that uses narratives or words in explaining and describing the meaning of each phenomenon, symptom, and certain social situations. In qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument to interpret and interpret every phenomenon, symptom and certain social situations. Therefore, researchers need to master the theory to analyze the gaps that occur between theoretical concepts and the facts that occur.²

¹ Dia Natalia, "Improving the Competence of Islamic Religious Extension Workers Through the Extension Working Group at the Rejang Lebong Ministry of Religion," 2023.16.

² Marinu Waruwu, "Educational Research Approaches: Qualitative Research Methods, Quantitative Research Methods and Combination

Besides qualitative, this journal also uses literature studies. According to Harahap, library research or literature study is a form of research conducted by studying and analyzing documents or written sources related to certain research topics. The materials needed to complete the research come from the library in the form of books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, journals, documents, magazines, and others. This research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the development of existing science in a particular field and to support or strengthen the arguments presented in the research.³ There are several definitions of this library research. Milya Sari suggests several definitions of library research from several experts, namely: 1) Literature research is a theoretical study, references and other scientific literature related to culture, values and norms that develop in the social situation under study. 2) Literature research is research that uses data collection techniques by reviewing, books, literature, notes, and various reports related to the matter to be resolved.⁴ So library research is a research activity carried out by collecting information and data with the help of various kinds of materials in the library such as reference books, similar previous research results, articles, notes, and various journals related to the problem to be solved.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Information Technology Media

The growing information technology is being used in almost all parts of life. One component that cannot be separated from the utilization of information technology is learning. In the education system, information technology is used as part of the learning process to present learning materials in a way that is more interesting, not monotonous, and makes learning easier to convey.⁵ Media comes from a Latin word and is often called the plural or media. The word "media" now literally means "intermediary." In this case, the intermediary in question is the intermediary between the source of information or message (Source) and the recipient of the message or information (Recipient). Therefore, in everyday life we often encounter media such as newspapers, online articles, movies, and television.⁶ The term "digital" comes from the Greek word "Digitus" which refers to fingers. Digital is a complex and flexible approach, making it a key element in human life. In this digital era, people tend to use media technology more often in various daily activities, including work, learning, and other activities.⁷

The term "information technology" refers to the ongoing process of knowledge and its methods for processing, transferring, and creating information. IT means that information is collected, organized, stored, published, used by the use of computers and the use of telecommunications toll, sound, image graphics, text,

numbers, etc.⁸ Thus, information technology media is a form of media that uses modern technology in the production, distribution, and consumption of information or entertainment. This media includes various platforms and tools, such as the internet, digital television, satellite radio, mobile applications, and hardware that allows interaction between users and their content.⁹ Along with the rapid development of information technology and multimedia, religious instructors are required to understand information and communication technology (ICT). Extension workers must also be able to apply information technology before they carry out extension activities so that they are able to mediate between knowledge and technology that continues to develop and benefit the target. The use of technological media to enhance religious extension can be an effective way to reach and interact with a wider audience. Here are some ways to do so: 1) Creating a website or blog that contains articles, lectures, or writings that address aspects of religion, values, or teachings. This site can provide a space for sharing knowledge, experiences and spiritual reflections. 2) Creating a podcast that covers religious topics, spiritual insights, or inspirational stories. This allows people to listen to religious content when they are traveling or busy with other tasks. 3) Create short videos or video-based shows that depict religious rituals, interviews with clerics, or explanations of religious teachings. Platforms like YouTube can be an effective place to share these videos. 4) Sharing scripture quotes, religious stories, or links to religious articles and resources on social media platforms. This allows for interaction and discussion with the audience. 5) Creating mobile apps that contain daily prayers, scripture, worship guides or religious study materials. These apps can be a practical means for people to carry out their religious practices. 6) Organizing webinars or live streaming sessions where clerics or religious figures can speak directly to audiences, answer questions, and give religious lectures.

Christian religious instructor

The role of religious instructors in the country is like working in silence. They are a light in the midst of society, guiding people to know religion, realizing a harmonious social-spiritual life, but quiet from publication. Religious instructors in a number of areas such as borders, islands, rural areas, prison institutions, or localization areas have their own stories of struggle.¹⁰ Religious Counselor is a person who is given the duty, responsibility and authority by the government to carry out religious guidance, development counseling through religious language to target groups. So that a Christian religious instructor is someone who is given the duty, responsibility and authority by the authorized official to carry out religious guidance and development counseling through the language of Christianity. Religious instructors have the responsibility of fostering and guiding the community in carrying out community life in obedience to God, where the teaching or guidance provided by religious instructors is in the form of

Research Methods (Mixed Method)," Tambusai Education Journal 7, no. 1 (2023), 2902.

³ Nursapia Harahap, "Library Research," Iqra Journal 8, no. 1 (2014): 68.

⁴ Milya Sari, "Library Research in Science Education Research," Natural Science 6, no. 1, 44.

⁵ Muhammad Rusdi, "Utilization of Information Technology as Media," Al-Aulia: Journal of Education and Islamic Sciences 5, no. 2 (2019): 97.

⁶ Amira Khansa, "Media: Definition, Functions, and Types," Gramedia Blog, <https://www.gramedia.com/literasi/media/>.

⁷ Rustam Aji, "Digitalization, the Era of Media Challenges (Critical Analysis of the Readiness of the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication to Welcome the Digital Era)," Islamic Communication Journal 1, no. 1 (December 16, 2016): 27.

⁸ Muhammad Rusdi, "Utilization of Information Technology as Media," Al-Aulia: Journal of Education and Islamic Sciences 5, no. 2 (2019): 96

⁹ Mawarni Rajagukguk et al., "Pengaruh Penggunaan Media Audio Visual Terhadap Keaktifan Belajar Pendidikan Agama Kristen Siswa Kelas VII SMP Negeri 1 Sitio-Tio Kabupaten Samosir Tahun Pembelajaran 2023/2024," *Jurnal Teologi Injili Dan Pendidikan Agama* 1, no. 4 (2023): 164–79, <https://doi.org/10.55606/jutipa.v1i4.202>.

¹⁰ Editorial, "Religious Counselors are the Lighthouse," CV. Rahmat Hafiz Al Mubaraq (South Kalimantan, 2017), <https://kalsel.kemenag.go.id/files/majalah/1495809377883.pdf>.

motivation and direction from religion.¹¹ As executors of the tasks assigned by the government, extension workers bear a great responsibility in shaping the character and morality of society. By providing religious motivation and direction, they help people to live a full life in accordance with religious principles and moral norms.

Benefits of Information Technology Media Use

The use of information technology media has significant benefits in various aspects of life. Here are some of the main benefits of using information technology media: a) Access to information: through the Internet, we have access to different types of information such as news, knowledge, and science. This is very useful for expanding your knowledge and finding answers to questions that you would not have found otherwise. b) Communication: It facilitates person-to-person and business-to-business communication, including email, SMS, and video calls. This is helpful in maintaining relationships with distant people and conducting business efficiently. c) Productivity: allows one to get work done more quickly and efficiently through software that helps in data management, report generation, or planning. d) Learning: you can learn anytime and anywhere through the Internet. This is very helpful in increasing learning opportunities for people with limited resources.¹² In education, ICT also enables the creation of interactive educational content, online learning, and more efficient assessment systems.¹³

Types of information technology media that can be used for religious counseling.

With the rapid development of science and technology in this era of globalization, it must be utilized as well as possible, especially by an extension worker to provide information and messages about religious counseling. In conducting the counseling process, an extension worker is not enough to use traditional media, such as through lectures and spiritual gatherings which in their delivery use oral media or speech communication. But in an era like today, extension workers can utilize the existence of technology and information, so that the religious counseling process is more targeted and not out of date. Such as through newspapers, magazines, short stories, tapes, movies, radio, television, stickers, paintings, advertisements and others that can encourage and assist an extension agent in carrying out Christian religious counseling. So that the counseling message can be delivered effectively and efficiently.

As for some types of technological media that can be used in the process of Christian religious counseling are: a) Film and video media, where in counseling activities, extension workers can show videos or short films related to the material presented by the extension workers. The extension workers can present

information and explanations through videos or short films that are shown. Some short videos that can be used by Christian religious instructors are available in the "Jesus film" application.¹⁴ b) LCD Projector and Overhead Projector (OHP) can display images directly on the big screen, where the extension agent can display the desired image in accordance with the material presented to the fostered residents.¹⁵ c) Podcast is one of the media that can provide inspiration for extension agents in delivering messages or motivation to many people, not only that podcasts can also provide an imaginary picture for audiences who watch podcasts of Christian religious instructors.¹⁶ d) Augmented Reality (AR) media is one of the media that can be used in counseling, especially to children. This media can combine images, video, audio and text into a real environment, so that the extension material presented by the extension agent seems to be more real which can increase the experience and understanding of the fostered residents.¹⁷ These are some of the technological media that can be used by Christian religious instructors to support counseling activities that can make counseling activities not boring.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion from the above material is that the use of information technology media, especially in the context of religious counseling, has a significant positive impact. Information technology makes it easier to present religious learning materials in a more interesting and effective way, not just monotonously. Information technology media, such as websites, podcasts, videos, and Augmented Reality (AR) media, can be effective tools to enhance Christian religious outreach. Religious educators need to understand and apply information and communication technology to be effective mediators between religious knowledge and evolving technology. By using various types of information technology media, religious educators can reach and interact with a wider audience, creating a space for sharing knowledge, experiences, and spiritual reflections. In addition, information technology media also provide benefits in various aspects of life, such as access to information, communication, productivity, learning and health. Therefore, the use of information technology media in religious counseling can be an effective way to convey religious messages and meet the demands of an increasingly connected and digitized modern era.

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¹¹ Maya Sipahutar Sipahutar Melina Agustina, Imeldawati Tiur, Winda Manalu, "Communication Ethics of Christian Religious Counselors," *ELETTTRA: Journal of Christian Religious Extension Education*, Tarutung State Institute of Christianity 1, no. 1 (2023): 231.

¹² Sri Wahyuni, "Poor Internet Network Is Not An Impediment To Christian Education: Improved Learning Achievement Through Smart Apps Creator," *Jurnal Teologi, Misi Dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen* 1, no. 2 (2021): 91-96.

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¹⁴ Syaiful Anam et al., *Islamic Value-Based Learning Media* (Padang, 2023), www.globaleksekutifteknologi.co.id. 23.

¹⁵ Thoha Firdaus, "Utilization of Technology-Based Media in Learning Utilization of Technology-Based Media in Learning," *Article: Learning Media STKIP Nurul Huda* (2018): 6.

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¹⁷ Esti Nur Qorimah and Sutarna Sutarna, "Literature Study: Augmented Reality (AR) Media on Cognitive Learning Outcomes," *Basicedu Journal* 6, no. 2 (2022): 2056.

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