



CONTENT: JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Journal homepage: <https://cjcs.usu.ac.id>



Utilization Of Digital Media in Improving Student Literacy (Case Study at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan)

Aulia Rahma Ritonga*¹, Maulana Andinata Dalimunthe², Nur'aini¹, Erna Januarini³

¹Faculty of Vocational, Universitas Sumatera Utara, 20155, Medan, Indonesia

²Faculty of Social and Political, Universitas Sumatera Utara, 20155, Medan, Indonesia

³Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Sumatera Utara, 20155, Medan, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: auliarahma@usu.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 01 October 2024

Revised 21 October 2024

Accepted 29 November 2024
2024

Available online 01 May 2023
29 November 2024

E-ISSN: 3032-4440

How to cite:

Ritonga, AR, et al. (2024). Utilization of Digital Media in Improving Student Literacy (Case Study at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan). CONTENT: Journal of Communication Studies, 2(2), 1-8. DOI 10.32734/cjcs.v2i02.18117

ABSTRACT

This study aims to see how to optimize the use of digital media in improving student literacy at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach. The data collection technique used is interviews and observations on four research informants, consisting of three students and one teacher. Data processing is carried out in three ways, namely Data reduction, Data presentation, and Drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that the use of digital media in improving student literacy is seen through more interactive and dynamic learning, by increasing reading interest and literacy skills. In addition, digital media is used to access broader and more diverse information, so that students can explore various topics and subject matter that support their intellectual development as a whole. The benefits of digital media are not only limited to improving students' literacy skills, but also strengthening the role of teachers as learning facilitators. By utilizing digital media, teachers can create a more inclusive and adaptive learning environment, where learning materials can be adjusted to the needs and abilities of each student.

Keyword: Digital Media, Student, Literacy, SDN 10 Rantau Selatan

ABSTRAK

penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat bagaimana optimalisasi Pemanfaatan Media Digital Dalam Meningkatkan Literasi Siswa SDN 10 Rantau Selatan". Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan ialah wawancara dan observasi pada empat orang informan penelitian, yang terdiri dari tiga orang siswa dan satu orang guru. Pengolahan data dilakukan melalui tiga cara, yakni Data reduction, Data presentation, dan Drawing conclusions. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemanfaatan media digital dalam meningkatkan literasi siswa dilihat melalui pembelajaran yang lebih interaktif dan dinamis, dengan meningkatkan minat baca dan keterampilan literasi. Selain itu, media digital digunakan untuk mengakses informasi yang lebih luas dan beragam, sehingga siswa dapat mengeksplorasi berbagai topik dan materi pelajaran yang mendukung perkembangan intelektual mereka secara menyeluruh. manfaat media digital tidak hanya terbatas pada peningkatan keterampilan literasi siswa, tetapi juga memperkuat peran guru sebagai fasilitator pembelajaran. Dengan memanfaatkan media digital, guru dapat menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang lebih inklusif dan adaptif, di mana materi pembelajaran dapat disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan dan kemampuan masing-masing siswa.

Keyword: Media Digital, Siswa, Literasi, SDN 10 Rantau Selatan



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International.

<http://doi.org/10.32734/register.v6i1.idarticle>

1. Introduction

The use of digital media is very important in various aspects of our lives, including in the aspect of education. As one of the main actors, students are required to have competent motivation and ability in utilizing various platforms that can support their needs for information, especially in the learning process. The lives of students in the digital era that are inseparable from technology indirectly influence the way of life and activities of students (Marjuni & Harun, 2019; Samsudi & Hosaini, 2020).

Efforts to create students who are proficient in using and utilizing digital technology are important. Currently, there are various kinds of technology-based or digital learning resources that can be used by students as learners in the learning process, but in fact, it must be admitted that there is still a lack of student competence in utilizing the use of digital media. Actually, the use of digital media is not something new, but its use is still not effective, there are still many students who tend to only focus on the conventional learning process (Jayawardana, 2017).

Many factors cause many students to still be found who have not optimally utilized digital media in the learning process. Among them, facilities and infrastructure that do not support, low student motivation, and inadequate skills (Yustanti & Novita, 2019). Therefore, awareness and enthusiasm are needed in students to improve the quality of learning so that they are better prepared to face the era of information disruption like today.

Purwijayanti & Munir (2021) through their research have shown that the conventional teaching and learning process which is driven by the use of digital media such as the use of audio-visual media in the school environment can improve student learning achievement. However, in the learning process, this does not mean that there are no obstacles, willingness, adaptability and network access also influence a series of obstacles to digital media-based learning (Hardiyanto, 2020). In addition, the use of digital media to encourage this literacy is not only seen from the ability of students to utilize it to meet learning needs, but also literacy in receiving/consuming information and when disseminating information (Dalimunthe et al., 2023). Digital literacy in application is not just about utilization in the student learning process, but also the ability of students to be wiser in managing the information around them.

Knobel & Lankshear (2015) stated that there are at least several factors that affect student literacy. Such as, facilities and infrastructure that do not support, low student motivation, and inadequate skills. Thus, digital media can accommodate facilities and infrastructure to improve digital literacy, including students of SDN 10 Rantau Selatan. The use of digital media in the teaching and learning process can be one solution to improve student literacy. Literacy in the 21st century includes not only reading and writing skills, but also digital literacy, namely the ability to understand, analyze, and use information from various digital media (Gilster, 1997). The use of digital media in learning is considered to be able to provide a more interactive, interesting, and effective learning experience, so that it can encourage students' interest in reading and improve their literacy skills (Leu et al., 2013).

The use of digital media, especially the internet at SDN 10 has not been maximized, both in terms of quality and quantity. This situation also has an impact on the low level of student literacy at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan. Based on the UNESCO report (2017), Indonesia has major challenges in terms of literacy, especially among elementary school children. In areas such as Rantau Selatan, limited access to quality learning resources and lack of innovation in teaching methods contribute to

low student literacy. In addition, conventional learning methods are less able to motivate students to read and understand the material well (OECD, 2019).

Previous research shows that digital media can increase student engagement in the learning process and also expand their access to more varied and dynamic learning resources (Livingstone, 2012). Applications, e-books, and learning videos are some examples of digital media that can be easily accessed by students to support increased literacy skills (Brown, 2020). In addition, digital media allows students to learn independently, deepen their knowledge, and foster an interest in reading (Johnson et al., 2016). Thus, the potential of digital media in improving student literacy is very large if utilized properly.

However, there are several obstacles faced in the implementation of digital media at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan, such as limited technological infrastructure and low digital literacy of teachers and students. Lack of training for teachers in utilizing digital media is also a significant inhibiting factor (Kafyulilo et al., 2015). In addition, students need proper guidance in using digital media so that they do not get caught up in unproductive use, such as access to inappropriate content or excessive use that can interfere with the learning process (Livingstone & Sefton-Green, 2016).

Therefore, this study aims to examine how the use of digital media can improve student literacy at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan. By understanding the challenges and potentials, it is hoped that this study can provide useful recommendations for schools and policy makers to optimize the use of digital media in learning. This study is also expected to contribute to the development of better digital literacy at the elementary school level (Jenkins et al., 2009).

2. Methods

This study uses a qualitative method to explore how the use of digital media can help improve student literacy at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore in depth the experiences, views, and interactions of students and teachers related to the use of digital media in the learning process. This study aims to understand the social context, perceptions, and dynamics that occur in the use of digital media, as well as its impact on student literacy (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). This study uses a case study design because this study focuses on one school, namely SDN 10 Rantau Selatan, as a single subject of study. Case studies allow researchers to intensively observe the learning process involving digital media and explore specific details that may not be visible with other approaches (Yin, 2018). The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, by selecting students and teachers who have experience using digital media in learning. The criteria for students to be used as informants are, students who are in IX class, participate in extracurricular organizations, and the students that recommended by teachers. Meanwhile, the teacher who was used as the informant was the "*Guru penggerak*". Total of three students and one teacher were selected to be interviewed in depth, and their interactions were observed during the digital media-based teaching and learning process. The selection of participants was carried out by considering variations in literacy levels and student involvement in the use of technology (Patton, 2015). Data collection techniques used in this study include: In-depth interviews conducted with students and teachers to explore their experiences and views on the use of digital media in improving literacy. Interviews were conducted directly with open-ended questions, to allow participants to express their views freely and in depth (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In addition, data was also collected through observation. Researchers conducted direct observations in the school environment during the teaching and learning process. This observation aims to see how digital media

is used in real learning contexts and how students respond to the use of this technology (Spradley, 1980).

3. Results and Discussions

The results of the study showed that the use of digital media at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan had a positive impact on the learning process. From the results of classroom observations and interviews with teachers, it was found that the use of digital media such as learning applications, educational videos, and e-books had increased student involvement in the learning process. Students were more motivated to follow lessons when using digital media compared to conventional learning methods. Digital media also provides variation in the method of delivering material, which allows students to learn in a more interactive and interesting way (Johnson et al., 2016).

The use of digital media in encouraging and improving partner literacy in the learning process and social interaction is important. The novelty of the empowerment model provided in improving student literacy at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan by facilitating facilities or infrastructure at partner locations and by providing guidance or guidelines on how to use digital media properly and effectively. With this partnership relationship, it can later create a healthy and wise society in using media. This socialization activity is further sharpened by the presence of facilitators who are skilled and neutral, such as higher education experts and practitioners. Utilization of Digital Media in Improving Elementary School Students' Literacy," offers various significant benefits. Digital media, such as e-books, interactive learning applications, and online educational platforms, can enrich the teaching and learning process by providing a variety of sources and methods that are more interesting and relevant to students. Through the use of digital media, students can engage in more interactive and dynamic learning, which can ultimately improve their reading interest and literacy skills. In addition, digital media allows access to broader and more diverse information, so that students can explore various topics and subject matter that support their intellectual development more comprehensively (Hobbs, 2010).

The interviewed teachers also stated that digital media helped them in delivering more complex materials in a simpler and more understandable way for students. For example, the use of learning videos shows visualizations of concepts that are difficult to understand only through textbooks. The use of learning applications also makes it easier for teachers to provide evaluations, because students can directly access quizzes or practice questions through the application (Brown, 2020). By utilizing digital media, teachers can create a more inclusive and adaptive learning environment, where learning materials can be adjusted to the needs and abilities of each student. This is especially important in elementary education, where individual differences among students vary greatly. Digital media also allows for more efficient and effective teaching, because the various tools and resources available can help teachers in delivering materials more clearly and interestingly. Thus, community service activities that focus on the use of digital media in elementary schools are not only beneficial for students, but also for teachers and the entire educational process (Miller & McCardle, 2019).

In addition, training for teachers in the use of digital media is also an important part of this strategy. Teachers need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to integrate digital media into their curriculum and teaching methods. Through this training, teachers can learn how to utilize online platforms to provide additional resources for students, as well as utilize digital tools to measure and track students' literacy development more effectively. This training can also help teachers develop more adaptive learning strategies that are in accordance with students' needs, so that the process of

increasing literacy through digital media can run more optimally. For example, students who used e-books and reading apps reported increased interest in reading. Students were more interested in reading e-books because of their ease of access and interactive features such as word searches and the inclusion of visual images.

The tools that used by the students are tablets, which are indeed provided by the school as learning support devices. This device is only provided during the learning process, and is returned when the learning process is complete. The use of tablets by students in improving digital literacy offers many benefits because this technology is able to provide fast and interactive access to various learning resources. With tablets, students can take advantage of various educational applications designed to improve their digital literacy skills, such as the ability to search for information, read with comprehension, and think critically about digital sources. One of the main advantages of using tablets is their interactive nature, which encourages students to be more actively involved in the learning process. They can access e-books, learning videos, and multimedia content that enrich their learning experience. Features such as touch screens and audio-visual integration on tablets allow students to learn in a variety of ways that suit their learning styles, be it visual, auditory, or kinesthetic.

In addition, tablets allow students to develop their independent information search skills via the internet, which is an important aspect of digital literacy. By learning to access, evaluate, and use information critically, students not only broaden their horizons but also strengthen their ability to interact with technology in a broader context. Tablets also facilitate collaborative learning. The applications allow students to work together in groups, share documents, have real-time discussions, and work on projects digitally. This not only improves digital literacy but also prepares them to work in a work environment that increasingly relies on collaborative technology. With the integration of tablets into learning, students gain access to technology that helps them adapt to the ever-evolving digital world, improving not only technical skills but also cognitive and social skills needed to fully participate in modern society. This supports findings from previous research showing that digital media can increase children's interest in reading and strengthen literacy skills (Livingstone, 2012). In terms of information literacy, students also became more skilled at finding relevant information and filtering out inaccurate content, which are important skills in the digital age.

The "Utilization of Digital Media in Improving Elementary School Students' Literacy" must be designed to maximize the potential of technology in supporting the teaching and learning process. One effective strategy is the integration of interactive learning applications that can be accessed via tablets or computers. These applications not only provide rich and varied reading materials, but are also equipped with features that motivate students to actively participate, such as quizzes, educational games, and animations. By using these applications, students can learn to read in a more fun and interactive way, which ultimately increases their interest in reading and literacy skills, because digital literacy does not only include the ability to read texts, but also the ability to search for, evaluate, and use information from various digital sources (Leu et al., 2013).

Although positive results were obtained, this study also found several obstacles in the use of digital media at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan. One of the main obstacles is the limited technological infrastructure in schools. From the results of interviews with teachers, it was found that schools only have a few computers and tablets that can be used for digital learning, and limited internet access. This means that not all students can use digital media at the same time, so teachers have to arrange turns to use the devices (Kafyulilo et al., 2015). The use of digital media in education, although it offers many benefits, also faces a number of challenges that need to be overcome so that its

implementation can run effectively. One of the main challenges is the limited infrastructure and accessibility of technology in various schools, especially in remote or less developed areas. Many schools still do not have adequate digital facilities, such as computers, tablets, or stable internet access. Without supporting infrastructure, the use of digital media in learning becomes difficult to implement evenly across schools. This challenge results in a digital divide, where students in schools with complete facilities benefit more than students in schools that are less equipped (Lynch, 2020).

Another challenge is the readiness and ability of teachers to integrate digital technology into the learning process. Many teachers do not yet have the technical skills or sufficient knowledge to use digital media effectively in the classroom. Lack of training and support for teachers to utilize digital technology can hinder the successful implementation of digital media in education. In addition, there are also challenges related to digital security and low digital literacy among students, which can make them vulnerable to inappropriate or harmful content online. Therefore, in addition to providing adequate infrastructure, it is also important to focus on increasing teacher capacity and students' digital literacy as part of the strategy for utilizing digital media in education.

Although teachers understand the importance of technology in learning, most teachers feel less confident in utilizing digital media optimally due to lack of training. This is in line with previous research showing that lack of technology training can be a barrier for teachers in adopting technology in the classroom (Ertmer et al., 2012). The teachers stated that they needed additional training to maximize the use of digital media in learning.

Based on the research results, the use of digital media has been proven to be able to increase student engagement in learning and provide a positive impact on student literacy at SDN 10 Rantau Selatan. This finding is consistent with the literature showing that digital media has great potential to support interactive learning and facilitate literacy development in the digital era (Johnson et al., 2016; Leu et al., 2013). Digital media is able to bridge the gap between conventional learning styles and the needs of students in the modern technology era, who tend to be more interested in visual and interactive learning approaches. However, this study also shows that technological infrastructure and teacher digital literacy are key factors that need to be considered to maximize the potential of digital media in learning. As stated by Ertmer et al. (2012), the biggest challenge in integrating technology into education is teacher readiness and access to adequate technological resources. Therefore, investment in the development of technological infrastructure and improving teachers' digital skills are important steps to optimize the use of digital media in improving student literacy in elementary schools.

4. Conclusion

In facing the challenges of utilizing digital media to improve student literacy, recommendations for teachers and parents are very important to ensure the success of education in this digital era. For teachers, one of the main recommendations is to take ongoing training that focuses on technology skills and digital literacy. This training can help teachers develop innovative and effective teaching methods, using digital media to support more interactive learning that is in accordance with student needs. In addition, teachers are also advised to actively seek out digital resources that can be integrated into the curriculum, such as educational applications, online learning platforms, and e-books, all of which can increase student engagement and enrich the learning process in the classroom. For parents, it is important to support the use of digital media at home in a positive and wise way. Parents should be actively involved in supervising and assisting children when they use digital technology to learn. This includes setting time limits for using digital devices, choosing

age-appropriate content, and discussing the benefits and risks of internet use with children. Parents are also advised to collaborate with teachers in supporting digital literacy programs implemented in schools, by ensuring that children have access to the necessary devices and a conducive learning environment at home. Thus, the role of parents and teachers can complement each other in forming students who are not only digitally literate, but also have strong literacy skills and are able to use technology responsibly. The use of digital media also needs to be integrated in a more structured way into the learning curriculum. Teachers must be able to align the use of technology with clear and measurable learning objectives, so that digital media is not only an additional tool, but also an integral part of the learning process designed to improve student literacy.

References

- Brown, J. (2020). *Digital Literacy and Education: Opportunities and Challenges in the Digital Age*. New York: Routledge.
- Dalimunthe, M. A., Pallathadka, H., Muda, I., Devi Manoharmayum, D., Habib Shah, A., Alekseevna Prodanova, N., Elmirezayevich Mamarajabov, M., & Singer, N. (2023). Challenges of Islamic education in the new era of information and communication technologies. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 79(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v79i1.8608>
- Ertmer, P. A., Ottenbreit-Leftwich, A. T., Sadik, O., Sendurur, E., & Sendurur, P. (2012). "Teacher beliefs and technology integration practices: A critical relationship." *Computers & Education*, 59(2), 423-435.
- Gilster, P. (1997). *Digital Literacy*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Hardiyanto, R. A. (2020). *Problematika Proses Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Berbasis Era Digital Di MAN Kota Batu*.
- Hobbs, R. (2010). *Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action*. Washington, D.C.: The Aspen Institute.
- Jayawardana, H. B. A. (2017). Paradigma pembelajaran biologi di era digital. *Jurnal Bioedukatika*, 5(1), 12–17.
- Jenkins, H., Purushotma, R., Clinton, K., Weigel, M., & Robison, A. J. (2009). *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Johnson, L., Becker, S. A., Estrada, V., & Freeman, A. (2016). *NMC Horizon Report: 2016 K-12 Edition*. Austin, Texas: The New Media Consortium.
- Kafyulilo, A., Fisser, P., & Voogt, J. (2015). "Factors affecting teachers' continuation of technology use in teaching." *Education and Information Technologies*, 20(3), 595-617.
- Knobel, M., & Lankshear, C. (2015). Digital media and literacy development. In *The Routledge handbook of language and digital communication* (pp. 151-165). Routledge.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Leu, D. J., Forzani, E., Rhoads, C., Maykel, C., Kennedy, C., & Timbrell, N. (2013). "The new literacies of online research and comprehension: Rethinking the reading achievement gap." *Reading Research Quarterly*, 48(1), 75-93.
- Livingstone, S. (2012). *Children, Internet and Risk: Global Perspectives*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Livingstone, S., & Sefton-Green, J. (2016). *The Class: Living and Learning in the Digital Age*. New York: NYU Press.
- Lynch, M. (2020). *Digital Divide: The Technology Gap between the Rich and Poor*. The Tech Advocate.
- Marjuni, A., & Harun, H. (2019). Penggunaan Multimedia Online Dalam Pembelajaran. *Idarah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 3(2), 194–204.

- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Purwijayanti, I., & Munir, A. (2021). Implikasi Gadget Terhadap Anak Usia Dini Di Taman Kanak-Kanak Tunas Mekar Kota Palu. *ECEIJ (Early Childhood Education Indonesian Journal)*, 4(2), 40–45.
- OECD. (2019). *PISA 2018 Results (Volume I): What Students Know and Can Do*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Samsudi, W., & Hosaini, H. (2020). Kebijakan Sekolah dalam Mengaplikasikan Pembelajaran Berbasis Digital di Era Industri 4.0. *Edukais: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman*, 4(2), 120–125.
- Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant Observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- UNESCO. (2017). *Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/8: Accountability in Education – Meeting Our Commitments*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yustanti, I., & Novita, D. (2019). Pemanfaatan E-Learning Bagi Para Pendidik Di Era Digital 4.0. *Utilization Of E-Learning For Educators In Digital Era 4.0. Prosiding Seminar Nasional Program Pascasarjana Universitas Pgrri Palembang*, 12(01).