ENHANCE ISLAMIC RELIGOUS GUIDANCE AND COUNSELNG BASED ON MAXIMIZATION TECHNOLOGY DIGITAL IN LANGKAT DISTRICT

(Case Study: Counseling Guidance During the Covid-19 Pandemic)

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted human activities, especially in religious counseling activities carried out by the Ministry of Religion in this study under the auspices of the Ministry of Religion, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province. The outbreak of covid 19 has made every extension worker look for other ways to provide guidance. maximizing the development of technology as a tool used by humans is a wise solution so that the tasks of religious instructors can continue to be carried out correctly and measurably. Determination of technology that is perceived by the public can provide a new variant for extension workers to conduct communication interactions. so that religious instructors conduct guidance using digital technology during a pandemic, this study uses a qualitative description method by conducting interviews, observation, and checking the documentation owned by religious instructors. After the data was obtained, it was reduced, presented, and concluded that the religious instructor in Langkat Regency carried out several online programs. namely the Online Motivation and Guidance (OMG) program is an Online Motivation and Guidance program. By creating a guidance group through the use of social media such as Whatsapp, Facebook, and YouTube, Instagram by uploading religious nuanced writings, Islamic appeals, and motivations, then carrying out religious coaching through webinars (Online Seminars) and Online Training. Another effort that is also being made is uploading videos. Then the Online Competition and Islamic Event (OCIE) program is the implementation of the Online Islamic Competition and Activities program. This program, is carried out at the age of teenagers who are considered quite relevant and have high enthusiasm to be invited to race in virtual competitions. With the implementation of this program, during the COVID-19 pandemic, they are being limited to school/college, but in this activity, they can still be creative and explore their potential.
Keywords: Digital Technology, Religious Counselor, Pandemic.

INTRODUCTION.

The Covid pandemic, or known as Covid-19, started with an outbreak that hit the Chinese city of Wuhan, endemic since December 2019. Since then, this crown-shaped infection has infected almost all countries on the planet. health regulations must be obeyed by the people. As in Indonesia, the government responded directly by issuing a health ministerial regulation which was revealed to be a health protocol. Likewise, regions throughout the country, Langkat Regency as one of them, refer to the data from the COVID-19 task force.

Data released by the Implementation of Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) for Micro Langkat Regency on May 2, 2021, shows that almost all sub-districts have been exposed to Covid 19. There are only about 4 sub-districts with green zone status. So that the local government and all stakeholders urge every individual to live a healthy lifestyle and reduce direct contact with the wider community or crowds. This condition forces all public services to think of a way out in the process of interacting with the community. Especially Islamic religious instructors who always interact directly with their mad'u or counseling targets.

With the above situations and conditions, it is necessary to hold persuasive activities both orally, in writing, and in behavior or so, which are carried out consciously and plan to influence other people, both individually and in groups so that an understanding, awareness, attitude, appreciation, and practice of religion, awareness to maintain health and break the chain of the spread of the coronavirus as a message conveyed to the target of counseling.

Indeed, religious instructors are agents of change for the government who participate directly in handling human safety. The problem is the ability of Islamic religious instructors to utilize technological facilities. In this condition, the extension workers must be able to access all available information, utilize digital technology facilities, and create new spaces to communicate with their extension targets. What we know next is online counseling as a temporary solution in dealing with the pandemic.

This is even in line with the Circular of the Director-General of Islamic Guidance Number: B.1673/DJ.III/HK.00.7/05/2021 concerning Optimizing the Utilization of Social Media in the Implementation of Guidance and/or Counseling of Islamic Religion during the Covid 19 pandemic. the role of Islamic Religious Counselors in carrying out the function of guidance and counseling that is informative, educative, consultative, and advocating for the wider community, is deemed necessary to optimize the use of social media. In other words, digitalization is a strategic way to carry out outreach activities during this pandemic.

The use of digital technology in Islamic religious education is the right answer if we refer to the pandemic conditions in Indonesia. By utilizing digital technology, even though it has a long distance, it will be easier for Islamic religious instructors to cover all important activities such as

community religious development. The public must be educated in the right way in the use of digital technology.

Langkat Regency consists of 23 Districts 37village, and 240villagewith an area of 6,262.00 km² and a population of around 1,032,330 people (2017) with a population density of 165 people/km²which has 163 scholars who are ready to become community role models[1]. Langkat is an area where the majority of the population are Muslims and Islam as religious teaching has had a great influence on local culture which is used as a reference in people's daily lives.

The vision of Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province is to make Langkat an advanced prosperous and religious through sustainable tourism and infrastructure development, with this big theme, it is hoped that all stakeholders in collaboration with the government in the Regency will realize the regional vision, especially for Islamic religious educators, which is the embodiment of a religious community.

Dominantly, the people in Langkat Regency have used technology in all activities of online media tools, which are already representative of being used by the community. The use of communication and information technology has become a common thing for the people of Indonesia. Regardless of age, gender, and economic level, people have used technology to communicate. Especially among teenagers. Predominantly today's teenagers are already using social media. Teenagers are the age that dominates in digitalization activities. They are so synonymous with gadgets that are almost 24 hours in hand and are very busy surfing the online world that seems to never stop.

Based on the reality of teenagers who are increasingly active in cyberspace like this, I am interested in formulating a strategy for Islamic religious education during the COVID-19 pandemic based on digital technology. The strategy that I will implement is stated in a scientific paper entitled: "Maximizing Digital Technology in the Implementation of Islamic Guidance and Counseling at Adolescents in Langkat Regency (Case Study: Guidance and Counseling During the Covid-19 Pandemic Period."[1] Putri Rahmadhani Lubis's Thesis, Communication Strategy for Islamic Religious Counselors, Ministry of Religion, Langkat Regency 2013, IAINSU Medan.

THEORETICAL BASIS.

2.1.Determination Of Communication and Technology

The word technology comes from the Greek, techne which means 'skill', and logia which means 'knowledge'. In a narrow sense, technology refers to objects that are used for the convenience of human activities, such as machines, tools, or hardware.[1] The word technology comes from the Latin texere which means to compose or build, so the term technology should not be limited to the use of machines, although in a narrow sense it is often used in everyday life.[2]

In a broader sense, technology can include understanding systems, organizations, as well as techniques. However, along with the development and progress of the times, the notion of technology is becoming increasingly widespread, so that today technology is a concept related to the type of use and knowledge of tools and skills, and how it can affect the human ability to control and change something that is around.

variations in interacting with individuals and the wider community must consider the audience so that the purpose of religious broadcasting can be carried out effectively and wisely. borrowing Anatol L. Appibaum's model in interacting with other people, namely by conducting persuasive communication, namely trying to persuade the audience in an intense and directed manner.[3], so we can touch the audience properly. This model does not leave the channel element in the persuasive interaction process. but the channel mentioned in the Anatol L. Appibaum model can also be interpreted as digital technology that is developing in the current era. We can see how the schematic process model is below.
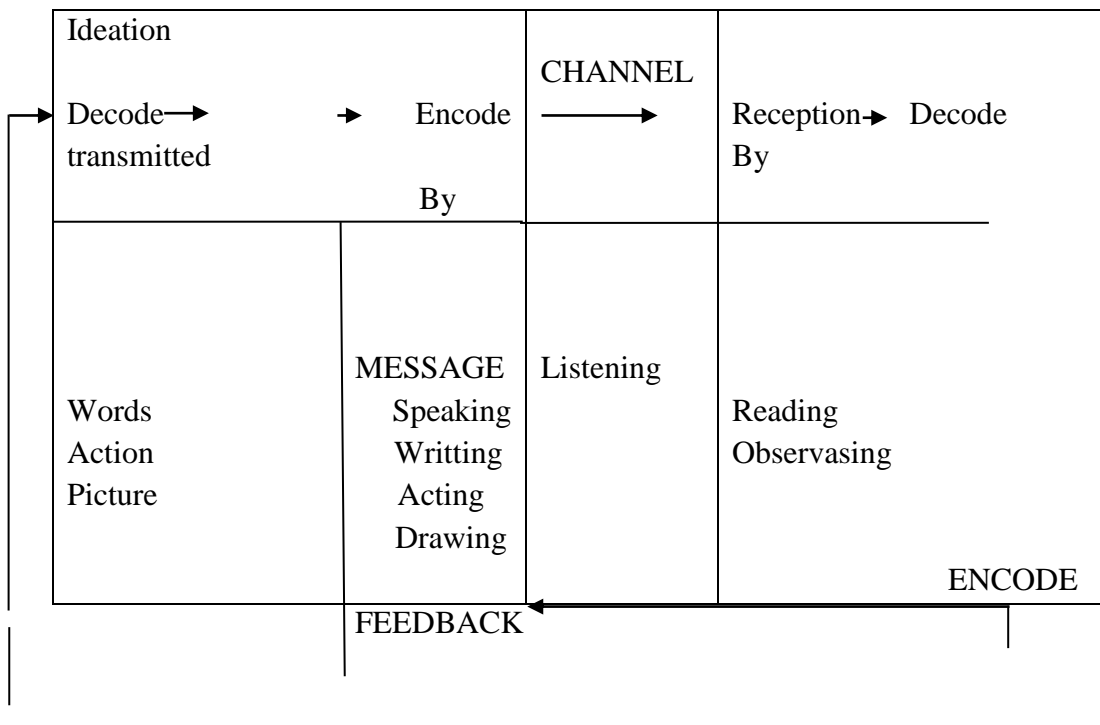
Ideation		CHANNEL	
Decode→ transmitted	→ Encode By	⟶	Reception→ Decode By
Words Action Picture	MESSAGE Speaking Writting Acting Drawing	Listening	Reading Observasing
			ENCODE
	FEEDBACK		

Figure 1. Persuasive Communication Model Schematic Between Humans Source: Jerry W. Koehler, Karl WE Anatol L. Appibaum: Organizational Communication, Behavioral Perspectives

In everyday life, the communication process always begins with a source, both individuals and groups who are trying to communicate with other individuals or groups. The first step, which

is taken by the source is ideation, namely the creation of an idea, or a set of information that will be informed in this case the Islamic religious instructor as the owner of the idea.

The second step, a message is encoding, where the source translates the information through words, signs, or symbols that are intended to convey information and are expected to affect others. Messages are tools where the source expresses ideas in the form of spoken language, written or nonverbal behavior, such as sign language, facial expressions, pictures, and others. In this case, religious content will be conveyed to teenagers as the target of counseling.

The third step in the communication process is the delivery of messages that have been encoded. The source conveys the message to the recipient by speaking, writing, drawing, or through certain actions. In this step, we recognize the term channel or channels, namely tools to convey a message. The channels for oral communication are face-to-face communication, radio, and telephone. While the channel for written communication includes any written material or media that can produce written words such as the use of digital technology as an information intermediary medium. The religious instructor as a source tries to free up obstacles and distractions so that the message can reach the communicant as desired.

The next fourth step is to divert attention to the recipient of the message, if the message is verbal, then the recipient is a good listener. Because if the recipient does not hear then the message will be lost. In this process, the receiver is decoding, which means providing an understanding of the interpretation of the message conveyed to him. Understanding (understanding) is the key to decoding and only takes place in the mind of the recipient. And it is the recipient who determines how to understand a message and how to respond to the message.

The fifth step, the last stage in the communication process is feedback or feedback that allows the source to reconsider the message that has been conveyed to the recipient. The response or feedback from the recipient to the message conveyed by the source can be in the form of words or save it. This feedback is used as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of counseling on the target of counseling at a young age

The development of human civilization is always marked by technological advances. Technology was created as an answer to the needs of human life. Every individual can access information quickly and accurately. In modern times, society, in general, has been faced with the rapid development of information technology which significantly has a major influence on people's mindsets in all aspects of life. This phenomenon leads the public to generally get all lines of heterogeneous and collective information. Digitization makes it easier for humans to transact information and other purposes.[1]

Humans in the modern era are often preoccupied with things that were initially considered taboo to do. However, due to the shift in a modern culture marked by technological developments today, people are more confident in doing everything in between their lives[1]. With the spirit of change, people who can master technology will benefit more from issues of work, education, and others. This is a culture and the main requirement for anyone who wants to

be called the progress of the times. Because if we can't use technology nowadays, people around us will think we're stupid. That is caused by the ability to use technology to become a standard for someone to follow the times or not.

Digital technology is one of the emerging forces. His presence has influenced various aspects of life such as religion, politics, economy, culture, and so on[2]. Policies and regulations that run in the international world certainly cannot be separated from the role of digital technology. An interesting issue to discuss is how the community faces these currents, then what role is played by the community, in this case, the Islamic religious instructor in Langkat Regency, as well as what efforts must be made so that the community can play a significant role because technology can bring change and development to the community. especially in terms of the development of human civilization.

The development of information technology makes people smart and partial in viewing life, whether economic, religious, social, and cultural. The development of technology brings different changes, depending on the level of intelligence, needs, economics, religion, and other social changes.[3]

In its destructive perspective, technology has changed human attitudes. Starting from small habits to things that may not be realized have made humans cannot be separated from a sense of dependence. Complex modern society, as a product of technological progress, mechanization, industrialization raises many social problems, sociopathic behavior, social deviation, social deviation, social disorganization, social disintegration, and social differentiation, is a real impact of the use of wrong technology, culture We see a society that tends to be, selfish, materialist, hedonistic, liberal, secularist, and even pragmatically vaguely seen in everyday life. This phenomenon must be responded to quickly by Islamic religious educators as an enlightener for the community.

Marshall McLuhan in his The Guttenberg Galaxi: The Making Of Typographic Man 1962.[4]All actions and events that are carried out by humans due to the influence of technological developments are the actual determination of technology because without realizing it, humans have been affected by everything brought by technology. Technology is one of the media as a variant of the form of mass media. Speed and ease of access are its advantages. In addition, technology as a medium has developed to become more personal since the emergence of various types of social networks and blogs.[5]

The determination made by the mass media is very parative, in fact, the impact of determination by the media can be seen from what a communicant does.[6]. The exposure that a person gets is not only a positive thing but can cause harm to the recipient of the exposure. Using technological media such as using a knife, we can only judge right or wrong when it is destined for something. The development of this technology is always juxtaposed with the times with the term globalization. Marxism uses a form of analysis of the development of human society called

"historical materialism". This analysis puts the idea that humans live in a material world that is determined,

Humans are the most unique creatures of God, this uniqueness is interpreted positively. The uniqueness of humans can be seen from the way and method of interacting. The process of sending messages between humans is an important part to pay attention to. For example, how fellow humans interact with each other. This process turns out to be the background for humans to create communication machines or what we call digital technology.

Human activities in dealing with everyday life that is instant and measurable force humans to think hard to create something. The demands of coercion can bring about changes in the world and the development of science. For example, with distance and time, humans create information and communication technology so that distance and time are no longer an obstacle. Thus, sophisticated and up-to-date communication tools such as mobile phones and the internet were created. This emergence indicates that the development of human technology is dynamic and continues to advance

Our various literacy sees and reads the term "who controls technology, then he controls the world", this term is not just an ordinary statement to read, but we need to realize that the progress of human civilization can be seen from how humans use technology. For example, if we look at developed countries using technology as a standard for their country's progress. By creating various tools for the convenience of human activities that we can feel starting from cooking rice, cooking water, finding intelligent robots, using technology in learning, selling, even preaching, in this case, guidance and counseling activities by religious instructors in Langkat Regency have also used technology.

Before humans invented technology, there were many things that humans could not do. But now that problem has been answered, for example, the process of counseling the community using technology is something that must be done if you do not want to feel left behind and left behind. Not infrequently we see Islamic religious educators using technology in carrying out their duties. Such as e-learning, Sinta, Google Scholer, and many other digital technology derivative applications that can be utilized by Islamic religious educators in carrying out their da'wah. Even the standard of social interaction can now be measured by how much they use technology as a means of interaction.

As a large and sovereign country, all citizens and especially religious instructors as opinion leaders must be dominantly able to use digital technology as standardization of advanced human beings. Many things will be obtained by society when they use technology. As citizens who want to be advanced and civilized, they should be able to take advantage of the development of digital technology in a positive way.

2.2.Religious Counselor

Religious instructors as delivering messages to others to provide information or change attitudes, opinions and behavior[1], both orally and through the media. As an explanation that an extensionist acts as a changer in the attitude and behavior of his communicant towards a better one. when referring to the concept above, an extension worker has an important role in improving human life. Religious instructors have a noble duty to carry out activities that appeal to the wider community. With the hope that people will get enlightenment and answers to the complex problems of life. Extension agents as community counselors become pillars of upholding goodness and preventing evil. In this case, it is necessary to pay attention to the model that will be carried out by religious instructors so that religious messages reach and have an effect on the wider community

an extension worker should have broad religious insight in order to be able to resolve conflicts in the field. Extension workers must have adequate knowledge so that they can work professionally.Paying attention to the criteria or qualifications of professionalism and performance of the extension workers, it demands that the instructors have certain competencies so that they can carry out their main tasks, including implementing the trilogy of functions, namely informative, educative, consultative and advocate functions.

In general, there are at least four competencies that PAI needs to have in order to proceed to become a professional profession. These competencies include pedagogic competence, professional competence, personal competence, and social competence. In detail each of the competencies that must be developed:

1) Pedagogic Competence

a. Carry out educational guidance and counseling;
b. Mastering the characteristics of the congregation from the physical, moral, spiritual, social, cultural, intellectual and emotional aspects;
c. Mastering the theory of counseling and the principles of religious guidance and counseling;
d. Develop curriculum related to religious counseling activities through face-to-face;
e. Can use information and communication technology for the benefit of learning in religious education;
f. Facilitating the development of the potential of the congregation to be able to actualize the various potentials they have;
g. Communicate effectively, empathically and politely with the congregation;

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[1] Abdul Basit, Department of Da'wah, State Islamic College of Purwokerto et al., "Challenges of the Islamic Religious Extension Professional and Its Empowerment," Da'wah Journal Year XV XV Journal of Da'wah, no. 1 (2014): 157–178.

h. Organizing assessment and evaluation of the process and results of counseling. Utilize the results of learning assessments and evaluations in extension for the benefit of extension development.

2) Professional Competence
a. Mastering the goals and targets of each guidance and counseling;
b. Developing counseling learning materials that are guided creatively;
c. Develop professionalism in a sustainable manner by taking creative actions;
d. Utilizing information and communication technology to develop themselves;
e. Mastering the administration of religious counseling that supports professional development.

3) Personal Competence
a. Presenting oneself as a person who is honest, noble, and an example for the congregation;
b. Present yourself as a person who is steady, stable, mature, wise, authoritative and rational;
c. Demonstrate work ethic, high responsibility, pride in being a religious instructor and high self-confidence. And; Uphold
d. High code of ethics for the religious extension profession.

4) Social Competence
a. Be inclusive, act objectively, and not discriminate or be primordial;
b. Communicate effectively, empathically, and politely with fellow extension workers and the community;
c. Adapt to the job site;
d. Good communication with own professional community and other professions orally, in writing or with information technology.[2]

To more clearly understand the things that often become obstacles in communication that can be done by religious instructors, it can be seen through the following statement.

a) The credibility of the religious instructor is low. Communicators who are not authoritative in front of the communicant, cause the communicant's attention to be reduced to the communicator.

b) Religious instructors Lack understanding of social and cultural backgrounds. Socio-cultural values that apply in a community or society must be considered, so that religious instructors can convey messages properly, not contradicting the prevailing socio-cultural values.

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[2]www. Ministry of Religion .go.id Mamik Syafa'ah in "The Article on Increasing the Ability of Islamic Religious Counselors Facing the Problems of Islamic Guidance and Counseling for Basic Level Islamic Instructor Training Participants" downloaded in February 2011.

c) Religious instructors do not understand the characteristics of the communicant. The characteristics of the communicant including education level, age, gender, and so on need to be understood by the communicator. Therefore, religious educators must be able to identify their audience

d) Religious instructors do bad prejudice. Negative prejudice between the parties involved in communication should be avoided, because it can lead to apathy and rejection.

e) Verbality. Communication that is only a verbal explanation in the form of words will be boring and obscure the communicant in understanding the message. Extension workers must have the ability to create new variants.

f) Religious instructors sometimes carry out monotonous one-way communication. This causes the communicant to lose the opportunity to ask for an explanation of things that have not been understood.

g) Religious instructors do not use the right media. The choice of using inappropriate media causes the message conveyed to be difficult to understand by the communicant.

h) Religious instructors are hampered in mastering the language. Differences in language cause different interpretations of certain symbols. Local wisdom in this case language is also a big concern in conducting counseling activities.[3]

3. Previous Study

1. Research conducted by Ulin Nihayah at the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication at UIN Walisongo in 2020, entitled The Cyber Extension Effectiveness at Religious Counselor in Semarang City explained that Cyber extension is an innovation of information systems and information technology based on cyber as a medium in the context of counseling to facilitate the performance of extension workers. . This study aims to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of the cyber extension of the Semarang City Religious Counselor. using exploratory qualitative research in knowing the cause and effect in the implementation of cyber extension on religious instructors in Semarang. The results of this study indicate that religious instructors have applied the concept of management by applying POAC in their extension activities. so that there is effectiveness in its performance as an extension worker. However, the implementation of cyber extension in its performance has not been fully implemented.

2. Research by I Gusti Ngurah Triyana, Ni Ketut Sri Ratmini, Denpasar State Hindu Dharma Institute in 2020 entitled Utilization of Social Media for Hindu Religion Counseling Social media, the result of the development of information technology. Hindu religious instructors, as part of the community, can also use this technology in carrying out the task of giving life enlightenment to Hindus. This study reveals how Hindu

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[3]Suranto Aw, Socio-Cultural Communication…. p.18

religious education is carried out by Hindu religious instructors in Abiansemal sub-district, how social media is used to support counseling activities and how the impact of using social media on Hindu interest in accessing Hindu religious content through social media. Social media users in Abiansemal sub-district who were interviewed randomly said that most people interacted through social media, where the content communicated is still general in nature, the content of Hindu teachings is very rarely communicated. Such facts can also be found through direct searches on various social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp.

3. Research conducted by I Gede Titah Pratyaksa1 & Niluh Wiwik Eka Putri Mpu Kuturan Singaraja State Hindu High School in 2020, entitled New Media as a Hindu Religion Extension Tool by Digital Native explained that in the current digital era there are various media options that can be used, for example . Social media has a very important role for Hindu religious instructors in providing counseling. Given that we have entered the industrial revolution 4.0 so that the use of communication technology is inherent in the younger generation. Therefore, modern packaging is needed with simple language so that it is easy to understand. Some social media can be used such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and others. Counseling on Hinduism by Digital Native can be applied through several methods on social media such as what Gede Prama did through a simple quote on his Instagram account, but hints at a very deep meaning, making it easier for the public to understand. Meanwhile, a creator named Puja Astawa can also imitate his method. Like making a short film on YouTube with messages of Dharma teachings. Thus, the millennial generation who are technology literate can watch these shows over and over again Like making a short film on youtube with messages of dharma teachings. Thus, the millennial generation who are technology literate can watch these shows over and over again Like making a short film on youtube with messages of dharma teachings. Thus, the millennial generation who are technology literate can watch these shows over and over again

4. Research byDlingo Nurkholis, Istifianah, A. Syafi'i Rahman, in 2020 with the title The Role of Religious Counselors in the Sakinah Family Assisted Village Program in Yogyakarta which explains that Religious Counselors are Civil Servants under the Ministry of Religion who are in charge, responsible and have full authority to carry out religious guidance and development counseling activities through religious language. The research approach was carried out using the method. A qualitative study concluded that they supported the implementation of DBKS (the village fostered by the Sakinah family) and did not move far beyond their duties and functions as religious instructors. But the main thing that hinders is the social conditions in religious knowledge

5. Research conducted byAA Putra DwipayanaThe title is Utilizing Online Information Media as a Strategy for Hindu Religious Counselors During the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic with its

findings that the role of Hindu religious instructors is to actually educate and foster the lives of Hindus by carrying out productive activities in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic that hit the world, including in Indonesia. Various government recommendations, both social distancing and physical distancing, require all levels of society to carry out daily activities at home, and this also has implications for Hindu religious educators who take advantage of the role of sophisticated information technology to support the activities of the ministry of religious programs in fostering religious life. Hindu. So that by utilizing the role of technology and information, it is expected to be able to understand religious teachings.

RESEARCH METHODS

Humans in the modern era are often preoccupied with things that were initially considered taboo to do. However, due to the shift in a modern culture marked by technological developments today, people are more confident in doing everything in between their lives[1]. With the spirit of change, people who can master technology will benefit more from issues of work, education, and others. This is a culture and the main requirement for anyone who wants to be called the progress of the times. Because if we can't use technology nowadays, people around us will think we're stupid. That is caused by the ability to use technology to become a standard for someone to follow the times or not.

Digital technology is one of the emerging forces. His presence has influenced various aspects of life such as religion, politics, economy, culture, and so on[2]. Policies and regulations that run in the international world certainly cannot be separated from the role of digital technology. An interesting issue to discuss is how the community faces these currents, then what role is played by the community, in this case, the Islamic religious instructor in Langkat Regency, as well as what efforts must be made so that the community can play a significant role because technology can bring change and development to the community. especially in terms of the development of human civilization.

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Before humans invented technology, there were many things that humans could not do. But now that problem has been answered, for example, the process of counseling the community using technology is something that must be done if you do not want to feel left behind and left behind. Not infrequently we see Islamic religious educators using technology in carrying out their duties. Such as e-learning, Sinta, Google Scholer, and many other digital technology derivative applications that can be utilized by Islamic religious educators in carrying out their da'wah. Even the standard of social interaction can now be measured by how much they use technology as a means of interaction.

As a large and sovereign country, all citizens and especially religious instructors as opinion leaders must be dominantly able to use digital technology as standardization of advanced human beings. Many things will be obtained by society when they use technology. As citizens who want to be advanced and civilized, they should be able to take advantage of the development of digital technology in a positive way.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Opportunities and Challenges of Islamic Religious Counselors in Langkat Regency in the Digital AgeInitially, religious broadcasting in Indonesia were carried out by religious leaders, namely Ulama, Mubaligh, Da'I, or Kiai who conveyed directly to the public. Its activities are carried out through recitation, tabligh, and other forms of da'wah both at home, breaking the mosque, and other places. Other activities are carried out in the form of pesantren, schools or madrasas, which provide various kinds of religious knowledge. Apart from that, religious leaders also convey social problems and guide daily life. This activity has been going on for a long time since the beginning of the entry of Islam in Indonesia.

In historical developments since the physical revolution, religious leaders, especially the ulama, encouraged the people to fight for independence by any means. Even religious leaders led the ranks, fought with their people against the invaders until finally together with other powers achieved independence and maintained it until it became an independent and sovereign state.

During the independence period, guidance efforts to the community continued to be carried out, both in the form of religious guidance and guidance in the social field in the context of building an independent and prosperous nation. The religious leaders who guide the community are appointed by the government as religious instructors and they are given tiring money in the form of honorarium.[1]

The extension program was strongly encouraged a year after the G30 S/PKI in 1966 because this program gave more value to mental resilience and devotion to God Almighty for both community members and all state apparatus. There were two strategic goals at that time, first, to raise awareness to the public that the atheistic teachings of communism were not suitable for living in Indonesia. Second, that the spirit of Pancasila that lives in the hearts of the nation and the people must be strengthened in its mental and spiritual resilience.

Langkat Regency consists of 23 sub-districts 37village, and 240villagewith an area of 6,262.00 km² and a population of around 1,032,330 people (2017) with a population density of 165 people/km²which has 163 scholars who are ready to become community role models[2]. Langkat is an area where the majority of the population are Muslims and Islam as a religious teaching has become a fundamental culture as a reference in people's daily lives.

The vision of Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province is to make Langkat advanced, prosperous and religious through sustainable tourism and infrastructure development, with such a big theme that all stakeholders are expected to work together with the district government to realize the regional vision.

Social problems that are global and regional are challenges that need to get the attention of the people, especially religious leaders because of problems that require a systematic and comprehensive solution. Global and regional developments are marked by the times when humanity enters the turn of the century. During that period there were very rapid changes such as it was impossible to predict where the changes would take place or where this human being would be.

In addition, the economic plug-in in Langkat Regency has led to increasingly sharp social inequalities in various circles. Which is influenced by the acceleration of the flow of information as a result of advances in communication technology and the dependence of one nation and another is stronger. The stronger nation will have a lot of influence on the weak.[3]

In the community guidance process, a reliable driver is needed to make good changes, namely religious instructors. Islamic religious instructors have functions and roles as religious leaders, places to ask questions for the community, leaders in society, role models in the community, motivators in describing all aspects of development, and are expected to be able to provide solutions to various problems.

Digital technology has positive and negative impacts on humans, if humans are not careful in using it, the dominance of technology will bring humans to the flow of technology demand.[4]. We see various cases with digital technology that humans become good, but with technology, humans can also become bad. We can classify this kind of behavior from various points of view. For example, we see the classification of material elements determines humans in choosing their technology, ordinary people will differ in determining the technology which then humans are carried away by technological developments.

Islamic religious instructors have functions and roles as religious leaders, places for asking questions for the community, leaders in society, role models in the community, motivators in describing all aspects of development and are expected to be able to provide solutions to various problems of the people and the nation's problems.[5]. The instructor must be able to present and compile da'wah material. Extension workers are government partners in changing the mental attitude of individuals towards a good direction.

The extension activities that have recently been observed in Langkat are extension workers, as usual, providing counseling for different extension targets. The target of the counseling includes the ta'lim perwiridan assembly for fathers and mothers, mosque youth, prisoners in prison, and the Qur'an Recitation Park (TPQ). The counseling materials are in the form of Islamic da'wah on worship, muamalah, Islamic laws, religious lectures on the commemoration of Islamic holidays, and provide guidance and training in reading the Koran.

The schedule for counseling that is recommended to be carried out based on the program that has been prepared by the Ministry of Religion of Langkat Regency through the Penamas section is at least once a week. However, extension workers are free to choose the day and time they want to carry out the extension. And extension workers are required to report the results of their activities once a month to the Penamas section with the knowledge of the Head of the Ministry of Religion in their respective Districts.

The Islamic religious instructor is a communicator who must have skills and skills in communicating, especially in the modern era that is spoiled by digital technology facilities. Therefore, as an Islamic religious instructor, it is better to understand and master the strategies in communicating. Because in the field, Islamic religious instructors will face problems in such a complex society. The success of an Islamic Religious Counselor in carrying out his duties in the community is influenced by several components including the selected and formulated strategy components. Islamic religious instructors must understand who they are dealing with given the Covid-19 condition that requires people not to linger doing activities outside the home as usual. In counseling, the role of communicators is very important. The method of counseling must be more creative and on target by utilizing existing facilities. [1]Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Directorate General of Islamic Institutions Section of the Project for Improving Religious Education in the Community and Religious Personnel, Guidelines for Operational Tasks of Main Islamic Religious Counselors, 2004, p. 7

[2] Putri Rahmadhani Lubis's Thesis, Communication Strategy for Islamic Religious Counselors, Ministry of Religion, Langkat Regency 2013, IAINSU Medan

[3]Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Directorate General of Islamic Community Guidance Directorate of Islamic Information, Guidelines for Communication Forum for Da'wah Institutions, 2011, p. 5

[4] David Holmes, Communication Theory: Media, Technology, Society, Communication Theory: Media, Technology, Society, 2005.

[5] Nurkholipah Nurkholipah, "The Influence of Islamic Counseling on Religious Awareness to the Community," Irsyad: Journal of Islamic Guidance, Counseling, Counseling, and Psychotherapy 5, no. Vol 5 No 3 (2017): Ersyad: Journal of Islamic Guidance, Counseling, Counseling, and Psychotherapy (2017): 287–310,
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Maximizing Digital Technology in Islamic Guidance and Counseling Activities in Langkat Regency

Humans are agents of culture, cultured humans are humans who have dignity and worth. The shift in the culture of interaction forced by the coronavirus outbreak has forced religious instructors in Langkat Regency to change the culture that was previously carried out in conducting counseling. Culture is concluded as the result of the work, initiative and creation of a very great human. Humans respond to the culture with their respective attitudes and roles. Culture does not only talk in terms of concrete products that can be seen and touched, but culture can also be felt and enjoyed abstractly, for example ideas or ideas that we can only enjoy abstractly unless the idea is applied and translated concretely. affected by exposure to technology that directly touches the person.

In carrying out Guidance and Extension activities to the target groups in Langkat Regency, initially the extension workers were able to interact and meet face-to-face freely and without problems. But in the end, lately the spread of the corona virus has happened unexpectedly. This causes all coaching and counseling activities to be constrained.

Based on the current conditions, a solution is needed to overcome the barriers to communication and interaction with the target group. Digital-based guidance and counseling programs are an option. Guidance and counseling through virtual space is considered strategic enough to be applied to the target group considering the target group is the millennial generation.

Supported groups such as Mosque Youth, Youth Community, Spiritual Groups and so on are considered capable of carrying out this digital-based coaching program because on average they are community groups who master technology.

There are 2 programs that are implemented in realizing this digital-based counseling guidance, namely:

1. *Online Motivation and Guidance* (OMG)

OMG is an Online Motivation and Guidance program. In this program, religious instructors carry out Motivation and Guidance activities in the network. The OMG activities include: creating a guidance group through the Whatsapp application, uploading da'wah writings, Islamic appeals and motivations on social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, carrying out religious guidance through webinars (Online Seminars) and Online Training. Another effort that is also being made is uploading a coaching video through a Youtube account

Islamic Religious Counselors within the Ministry of Religion of Langkat Regency carry out the functions of religious instructors, namely informative functions, educational functions and consultative functions. In this case, religious instructors show their role and existence through the informative methods they use, such as providing assistance and providing information related to religion. While persuasive actions are carried out in consultative activities, namely by providing advice, guidance, forming target groups, holding counseling and guidance. Then an educative role is carried out in carrying out the task of providing information, namely

providing religious knowledge to the community, providing an understanding of the Qur'an, providing guidance and training and being a good example for the community.

2. Online Competition and Islamic Events (OCIE)

OCIE is the implementation of the Online Islamic Competition and Activities program. In this program, teenagers are considered quite relevant and have high enthusiasm to be invited to race in virtual competitions. With the implementation of this program, during the COVID-19 pandemic where they are limited to school/college, activities and must minimize activities, they can still be creative and explore their potential if they participate in this online competition.

Several competitions that have been realized include the Selection of Online Halal Product Ambassadors and the Virtual Tahfiz competition. Furthermore, the Anti-Drug Creative Video Making Competition, Muharran Festival and so on will soon be held.

Meanwhile, for Islamic activities, the extension workers also held several activities such as the Halal Product Expo and the Festival of the Koran. Especially for the halal product expo, it is carried out by gathering millennial Muslim traders who have culinary, fashion, cosmetic businesses and so on into one account in the form of a business Facebook account, the account is named Warung Berkah Pokjaluh Batser. In this account, traders are free to promote their merchandise, which is also assisted by extension groups and halal product ambassadors in distributing the uploads of these traders to the public.

In the Gebyar Qur'an program there are several Islamic activities that can be participated in by teenagers, namely collecting Al-Qur'an waqf on social media, tahsin al-Qur'an online, to training in the art of reading the Qur'an online.

The OMG OCIE program is quite effective in implementing the optimization of Islamic Guidance and Counseling Activities during the COVID-19 outbreak. At this time the government is still encouraging the public to continue to obey the health protocols. Through the virtual room, coaching can still continue. Nevertheless, efforts are needed to educate the public in the procedures for using digital technology in a positive direction. So that people are smart in using technology as a communication tool. Do not let the use of this digitalization technology can drag us to bad things and mentally damage.

A. Conclusion

The modern world is always associated with technological developments, in this case the development of digital communication. All community activities are based on the shrewdness of using digital era technology. Digitization of information has both positive and negative impacts. Depends on the designation and is always influenced by the intelligence and policies of its users.

With the development of technology, people easily get information without a clear filter. However, if people are wise in receiving information, then this digital era communication is quite promising in all human daily activities, especially in carrying out the da'wah of religious

instructors. Digital era communication is indicated as the mediation of information messages evenly and widely without any limitations through modern communication media, based on interconnection connections.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a tough challenge for extension workers to interact with their da'wah targets. The solution is to maximize the development of digital technology as a medium of social interaction. The more we are able to master technology, the more models of guidance and counseling we will do. May we always be in the protection of Allah swt and be successful in carrying out daily activities. amen

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