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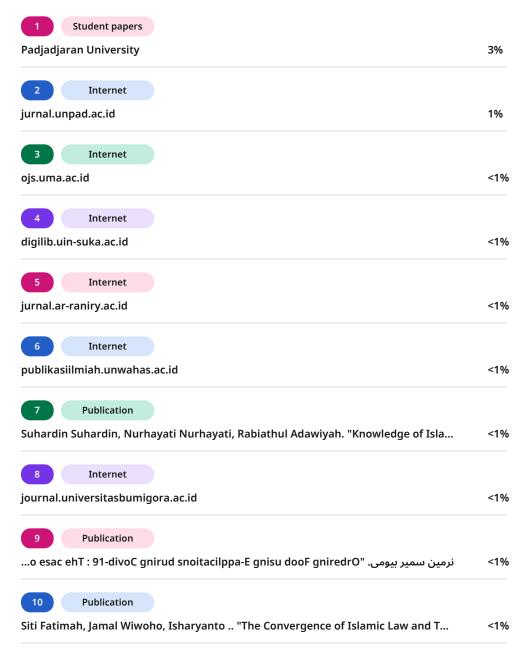
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Exploring Adolescents' Digital Information-Seeking Patterns and ReligiousBehavior

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the behavior of seeking religious information among teenagers in the digital era with a focus on three cities in Indonesia, namely Medan, Yogyakarta, and Makassar. The selection of these cities was based on the representative characteristics of High Schools in Indonesia, as well as the differences in the characteristics of Islamic Spirituality (Rohis) in each city. By applying a qualitative approach, research data were obtained through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and direct observation. This study also compared the findings with other relevant literature. The results of the study show that teenagers in these three cities have religious information seeking behavior that is influenced by the social environment, access to technology, and the role of local religious figures.

Keywords: Information search behavior, adolescents, digital era, Religious Information

Menjelajahi Pola Pencarian Informasi Digital dan Perilaku Keagamaan Remaja

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perilaku pencarian informasi keagamaan di kalangan remaja di era digital dengan fokus pada tiga kota di Indonesia yaitu Medan, Yogyakarta, dan Makassar. Pemilihan kota-kota ini dilakukan berdasarkan perwakilan karakteristik Sekolah Menengah Atas di Indonesia, serta perbedaan karakteristik Rohani Islam (Rohis) di masing-masing kota. Dengan menerapkan pendekatan kualitatif, data penelitian diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalan, diskusi kelompok terfokus (FGD) dan observasi langsung. Penelitian ini juga melakukan perbandingan temuan dengan literatur lain yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa remaja diketiga kota ini memiliki perilaku penelusuran informasi keagamaan yang dipengaruhi oleh lingkungan sosial, akses teknologi, serta peran tokoh agama lokal..

Kata Kunci: Perilaku penelusuran informasi, remaja, era digital

INTRODUCTION

In the midst of the advancement of the digital era, access to information is getting easier, including information related to religion. The internet and social media platforms such as WA, Facebook and Instagram have become the main source for many individuals, especially teenagers, to get information. Teenagers as a digital native generation have a high tendency to utilize technology in various aspects of life, including in seeking information about religion. The internet and social media have become the main



Based on a survey conducted by the Center for Islamic and Community Studies (PPIM) UIN Jakarta, many Indonesian teenagers, especially from the Millennial Generation and Generation Z, use social media as their main source of religious information. The survey results show that although young people are not very devout or routine in carrying out religious rituals, their views on religion tend to be conservative than more previous generations. Social media plays important role in shaping views and the most active in accessing religious information through various media (PPIM UIN Jakarta, 2021) . This indicates that social media plays a major role in shaping religious understanding and views among teenagers.

The use of social media is closely related to the level of religious maturity religious commitment and among adolescents. Differences in the use of social media affect variations in the level of religious and maturity religious commitment among adolescents. Adolescents try to fulfill their religious information needs from external sources through social media (Retpitasari & Oktavia, 2020) . Social media provides extensive access to religious information from various external sources that enable their religious information needs in a more flexible and diverse way. The way they use the platform can impact how they form and strengthen their religious beliefs and practices.

Access to religious information among high school students who join religious communities such as Rohis, plays an important role in organizing religious activities, disseminating religious values and forming a religious community among students. Rohis not only provides access to religious information but also shapes the way students understand and apply religious teachings in their lives. Access to information covers religious aspects, namely sources of information, methods of obtaining information and the process of internalizing these values in everyday life, this then shapes religious views among adolescents. For example, views on relationships with friends of religions, understanding tolerance, the meaning of jihad, terrorism, Islamic law, nationalism, and the concept of state and nation (Dalimunthe Purwaningtyas, 2020).

Access to and quality of religious information play an important role in shaping students' attitudes towards tolerance. A recent survey by the Setara for Democracy and Institute revealed concerns regarding the growing of students showing active number intolerance at the senior high school (SMA) level in five cities in Indonesia. The number of actively intolerant students has increased compared to the 2016 survey. In the previous survey, 2.4% of students were included in the actively intolerant category, while now that number has increased (Wardah, 2023) . Students who have limited access to the internet tend to have more rational views than students who are free to access the internet (Center for Islamic and Community Studies (PPIM) UIN Syarif Hidatullah, 2017). This could be because students who are not exposed to the internet are more limited in accessing various types of information, including extreme or radical content that can often be found online. Without internet access, they are more likely to get information from more controlled sources,

such as textbooks or materials delivered directly by teachers or lecturers who are generally more moderate and structured.

According to research by the Maarif students high school considered the most vulnerable to being influenced by radical ideology. One factor that supports this vulnerability is the history of these cities being known as the place of origin of several terrorists. In radicalism addition also adolescents through religious activities of Islamic religious schools or Rohis which are often a means of spreading this ideology (BBC News Indonesia, 2018) . Radical ideas can seep into the school environment through various factors such teacher teaching methods in the classroom, textbooks that may contain intolerant views that obscure understanding of the material. intervention and influence of alumni in extracurricular activities, and weak school policies (Rahmawati et al., 2023).

Previous research conducted by Zulkarnain Yani (2017) who stated that Rohis activists are one of the extracurricular activities that are popular among teenagers in high school. This research was conducted as a policy study at SMA Negeri 3 and 4 in Medan City, North Sumatra. The results of the study revealed that teenage students who participated in Rohis preferred light and easy-to-understand religious materials, although they tended not to know the names of the authors and the materials reading (including intellectual background and personal life of the authors), and did not know the reference sources used in the reading materials.

The reception of Islamic spiritual activists on religious literature in Jakarta shows that most students have limited understanding and narrow perspectives.

This causes their preference for religious literature to lean more towards novels with religious themes that support the obligatory and sunnah practices of adolescent worship (Nur, 2015).

Reading materials found in the field for Rohis groups include books. materials magazines, bulletins, for mentoring, and video CDs and DVDs. In addition, news from the internet and social media are also included in the category of reading materials. Some of these reading materials, such as old texts inherited from seniors before 2010, tend to be less popular and rarely accessed by Rohis teenagers and other teenagers. In contrast, religious readings that are more frequently accessed are those that do not only focus on dogmatic teachings (such as Salafi), but also include more moderate readings. In addition, Rohis students access more reading sources from online media and social media (Maknun et al., 2018)

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative involving collection approach data through field observations to explore in depth the access to religious information among Rohis youth. Qualitative data provide in-depth and detailed insights, describing the processes that occur in a particular context. With this approach, researchers can follow the sequence of chronologically, assess events relationships, and obtain informative explanations. In addition, qualitative data often reveal new, unexpected findings and support the development of new theoretical frameworks, helping researchers beyond initial to go assumptions and established structures (Silalahi, 2009).

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to analyze Rohis activities in public high schools



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located in three major cities in Indonesia, namely Medan, Yogyakarta and Makassar. The selection of these three cities is based on several factors such as the large number of public high schools, the high mobility of teenagers in accessing religious information and the existence of a significant educated middle class.

In the research on access to Rohis religious literature in three cities in Indonesia, namely Medan, Makassar and Yogyakarta, it was conducted after a preliminary study considering why the three cities could represent other cities in Indonesia. Although there are similar arguments as the basis for selecting these three cities, each city has different specific reasons for being the object of research.

Data collection in this study will be carried out using several methods, namely:

- 1. FGD (Focus Group Discussion) is conducting interviews with groups of people discussing a particular topic or issue to gain an understanding of the views of each individual in the group.
- 2. Directly observing the Rohis extracurricular activities carried out by high school students, especially those related to religious education, religious views, and how they access religious literature.
- Collecting data on Rohis activists, including sources of religious information. This method aims to help researchers analyze the views, religious content, and behavioral patterns of access to information of Rohis members in high schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In understanding how information access works, it is important to first understand a person's need for information, especially in the context of a

global society that is highly consumerist of information. The need for information often arises from a deep desire to obtain the information itself. In the information society, which plays a role as the creator, disseminator, processor, and user of information, the impact of globalization is enormous. The information society also forms a digital society, where almost half of the information needs can be met through digital networks.

According Wilson (2000)to information needs can be grouped into three categories, namely 1) physiological needs, namely basic needs required to maintain physical life, such as the need for food and drink. 2) affective needs, namely needs related to feelings and emotions, such as the desire to achieve personal goals and gain emotional satisfaction. 3) cognitive needs, namely needs that arise from the desire to understand something, such as the need for deeper information and new knowledge. The need for information in today's cyber and global society often interacts with these three showing how information categories, plays an important role in fulfilling various aspects of human life.

The fulfillment of information needs information behavior, includes the processes and methods used by individuals to obtain satisfaction for their information needs. The Internet, is short for which "interconnected network," is a network system that connects millions of computers around the world. With the Internet, data can move from one computer to another even though they are separated by great distances. The Internet allows exchange of information to occur quickly without being hindered by physical distance between computers.

The Internet is a storehouse of information that provides all kinds of



knowledge, from simple things to very complex ones. Users can manage the information accessed by storing it on storage media or printing it on paper, so they don't always need to be connected to the Internet to view the information. Along with increase amount users, the Internet has create culture new integral in life everyday life. The presence of the Internet has become the more important Because make it easier access information and communication. In addition, the internet is used by many people to work from home, while scientists use it to support their research. The presence of the internet has caused significant changes in various areas of life.

From an educational perspective, the Internet functions like a vast and complete library, storing billions of information in various forms such as text, images, animations, videos, and sounds. Users can access, obtain, and store this information anytime and from anywhere through the Internet network. The Internet is often considered a virtual world because it reflects almost all aspects of real life, such as business, entertainment, sports, politics, and others, also exist on the Internet. This make the Internet a source very valuable power in education and various field other

The role of media as a transmitter of information is to provide information to the public continuously. New media, or new media, offers features such as digitization, convergence, interactivity, and network development in the process of creating and delivering messages or information. Its ability to offer interactivity allows users to choose the information they want to consume, control the output information, and make choices according their wishes. This to interactivity is a central concept in understanding new media, making it a more personal and flexible tool compared to traditional media.

A. Fulfillment of Religious Information **Needs Through Conventional Access**

Fulfillment of information needs through conventional access involves traditional methods of obtaining religious information using physical media and traditional methods. People can access religious information through religiousthemed books.

" ...the ones I read most often are religious books, about why people are like that, then I refer to biographical books like Buya Hamka and other great religious figures " (ST 1)

Respondents have specific needs regarding why people can act or behave in a certain way in the context of religion. This indicates the need for evaluative information where they seek explanations or understanding of human behavior from a religious perspective. Informants choose authoritative and authoritative sources offer normative guidance biographies of figures that provide real examples in religious life. The use of biographies of figures that can be used as references not only seeks theoretical information, but also practical information that can be taken from the real life of the religious figure.

" If I read a book like Buya Hamka, a figure I admire, I would look at Google more often than ask people around me " (GT 1)

Google indicates that informants have preference for conducting independent precisely searches and through practically search Information searches prefer methods that provide full control over what will be found, compared to traditional methods such as asking other people directly. Interest in religious figures such as Buya Hamka indicates a specific need for

information related to religious figures who are considered inspiring.

The da'wah approach developed by Hamka is personal and dialogical in nature and is closely related to the process of searching, disseminating and receiving information in a religious context. The dialogical da'wah method reflects two-way interaction in the dissemination information. In searching for information, this is similar to searching for information that actively communicates with sources, both human and written, to deepen understanding. Dialogue in da'wah allows people to actively participate in the exchange of knowledge, ask questions they do not understand and get direct clarification. In the modern era, a personal da'wah approach is still very relevant because society faces various complex cultural and technological problems. Along with social change and globalization, Hakmah's da'wah method which focuses on dialogue and a personal approach remains relevant because it provides space for people to continue to search and process information amidst the rapid flow of global information. Hamka's da'wah has succeeded in increasing people's acceptance and understanding of Islamic teachings in line with the principle that information that is well understood tends to be adopted more strongly (Ulfa & Eti Efrina, 2024) . In searching for information with the personal life of the information seeker, where the seeker is more likely to accept information that is considered relevant to their condition. This success shows that Hamka's method is able to connect religion with social reality, making preaching more meaningful and acceptable to various groups, which is the key to effective information seeking.

The rapid flow of public information including Islamic content received by society and Muslims today requires wise

handling. The rapid development in the production of Islamic content must be balanced with progressive, accommodating, and solution-oriented regulations and education. The state has responded to this by issuing Law No. 3 of 2017 concerning the Book System to regulate and support the book industry. Mass communication, which relies on mass media, has a primary function as a process of conveying information to the wider community. Mass media allows information from public institutions to be conveyed quickly to the public, achieving an informative function in a short time.

" ...I am also inclined towards Islamic jurisprudence..." (S21)

Teenagers' great curiosity about religion reflects an important phase of their development in seeking identity, meaning of life and answers to deep questions. Active search for religious information is not only about literary books but also figh which shows a structural, authoritative and approach in seeking answers to religious questions.

" ...the first is the first book by Ust Abd Somad, 70 Madzhab Abu Dhabi, the second is 99 questions and answers about prayer, Islamic brotherhood, Islamic madzhab... " (ST1)

information illustrates how seekers seek clear and authoritative answers about how to worship and how figh provides guidance in various life activities. Information search behavior where someone seeks information from a trusted source and is considered to be able to provide the right explanation according to the teachings of the religion they adhere to. Figh focuses on the legalistic aspects of Islamic teachings, namely what is allowed and prohibited and how to apply it in everyday life.

the realm of information technology, Law No. 11 of 2008 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions has been issued as a legal guideline in line with the gradual progress of content. However, there are still shortcomings in real implementation in the education sector, advocacy, and development of the capabilities of users and users of Islamic content. There is an impression that public Not yet own guidelines clear ethics related with distribution content free Islam . More continue, initiative together from various party For make public as maker content, not only as consumers, still Not yet come true with real . For overcome problem This the Pentashih Institute Books Content Islam The Indonesian Ulema Council (LPBKI-MUI) is trying For connect various party related content Islam like organization Islamic mass, college high Islam, leader cottage Islamic boarding schools and organizations youth based on Islam under Indonesian Ulema Council . The purpose of effort This is For unite policies, perspectives, and participation active from various stakeholders interest with people, so that content Islam No only beneficial for manufacturer content but also can increase quality life religion and state in the Republic of Indonesia.

Currently, there are concerns about efforts by certain parties to undermine Islamic teachings by eliminating religion from various aspects of the lives of Muslims in Indonesia. One method used is through the dissemination of news and books that are not in accordance with Islamic principles. This problem is the responsibility of the Indonesian Ulema Council's Islamic Book and Content Dissemination Institute (LPBKI-MUI) to review and provide criticism of the content of books and other information media. LPBKI-MUI is responsible for ensuring that the content disseminated does not

damage the mindset of the community and remains in accordance with Islamic teachings, in order to protect the community from negative influences that can damage their faith and religious practices.

The Minister of Communication and Information of the Republic of Indonesia, Rudiantara, showed his great enthusiasm for the Indonesian Ulema Council's Book and Islamic Review Institute (LPBKI-MUI) the 1st LPBKI Islamic Content Stakeholder National Meeting. The Minister of Communication and Information hopes that LPBKI-MUI can carefully select Islamic content, determining which is halal and appropriate to be disseminated as a reference and which is haram. With more than 97.4% of internet users in Indonesia, around 129.2 million people, using social media, checking Islamic content is very important to ensure the quality and suitability of information received by the public.

Teenagers in Yogyakarta are very enthusiastic about downloading books and have experienced many changes and developments, including name changes. In the past, Rohis was at a lower level, but it has experienced significant improvements. In fact, mosque teenagers are now also involved in Rohis, with names and activities that have changed. For example, in SMA 3, Rohis activities are no longer limited to the internal scope; they also carry out outward da'wah, such as providing training on how to slaughter sacrificial animals properly. activities have also developed, where young people not only learn religion, but also have many references, such teaching, training, mentoring, and technological following developments. They also follow celebrity grams, as mentioned by Mr. Sarjo, so they have

many references that only need guidance, training, and mentoring. Ideology has also developed and now depends on existing trends, making Rohis a popular topic in various organizations. Among NU and Muhammadiyah, Rohis is now used generally, unlike in the past when it was more exclusive. However, this also makes schools more vulnerable infiltration, whether consciously or not.

Novels can function as a source of religious information by conveying moral values and religious teachings through interesting stories that are easy for readers to understand. There are main categories of moral values that are raised, for example in the novel " ayat ayat cint " by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. This novel emphasizes the importance of performing prayer as the main obligation of a Muslim. The characters in the novel often show gratitude for the blessings given by Allah, reflecting the attitude that every Muslim should have. This novel also highlights the activity of reading and experiencing the Qur'an as part of religious life that should be carried out by every Muslim. "Ayat-Ayat Cinta" is not only a literary work, but also an educational tool that strengthens the reader's understanding of Islamic teachings and the importance of applying moral values in everyday life (Hartati & Primi Wulan, 2016).

Historically, Islam has been closely related to the culture of reading and writing, especially in the context of Islamic literacy. Islamic literacy has become the main foundation in the development of Islamic science and civilization. Institute for the Authorization of Books and Islamic Content of the Indonesian Ulema Council (LPBKI-MUI) plays an important role in this effort by continuing to collaborate with various parties to public awareness importance of Islamic and national literacy

. LPBKI-MUI does not only focus on the authorization (examination) of Islamic books and content, but also strives to support increased literacy among the younger generation, who are currently very familiar with information technology. Prof. Endang, as one of the figures in LPBKI, stated that this institution often involves the younger generation discussions and asks for their opinions on Islamic content. This step aims to increase awareness of the younger generation of the importance of literacy, especially Islamic literacy, in building a strong religious identity and understanding in this digital era.

Nadirsyah Hosen emphasized the importance of being careful in accepting information from online media and social media. He emphasized that if the identity information disseminator unknown or unclear (majhul), then the information cannot be relied on and should not be used as a reference. Hosen also encouraged students to play an active expanding role appropriate in effective Islamic content on social media, by bringing Islamic boarding school-style studies to the platform. However, he reminded that the main reference must still be the Our'an, Hadith, and scholars, but the content of these studies needs to be presented in a way that is more interesting and easy to understand for those who do not have an Islamic boarding school educational background. He also quoted, "Whoever cannot keep up with the times, then he will become a fossil," to emphasize the importance of adapting to the times in spreading Islamic teachings (Nazilah, 2019).

in the current millennial era, publishing broadcasting media containing religious content have experienced a significant increase. This is especially evident in the publication of the Qur'anic



manuscripts, which is marked by the increasing number of new publishers emerging. In addition, the published manuscripts are increasingly complete and creative, with the addition of interpretation, fiqh, history, and life wisdom, making them richer and more useful for readers.

B. Fulfillment of Religious Information Needs Through Digital Preaching Content

The emergence of the virtual world and cyber society has given rise to various new organizations that operate online, such as the Instagram account Sahabat Hijrahku Medan This religious organization, especially in the context of Islam, utilizes digital platforms to attract a larger audience. They organize various activities aimed at inviting people towards goodness and purity of Islamic teachings. The values they promote often refer to relatively enduring beliefs in an object, action, or principle, and they use media to disseminate digital messages more effectively and widely.

" ..regarding emigration, teenagers who emigrate " (S41)

Teenagers' interest in the theme of hijrah indicates a deep need for spiritual transformation. The term hijrah among today's Muslim teenagers often refers to a change for the better, following Islamic teachings more devoutly. Digital da'wah content such as online lectures, podcasts, YouTube, or other social media are the main sources of information to fulfill this spiritual need. Through social media, they can find da'wah content that is relevant to the theme of hijrah that provides guidance, motivation and support their transformation process. The phenomenon of hijrah among Muslim teenagers reflects a deep spiritual search amidst the rapid flow of modernity. The urge to transform oneself towards a better life according to Islamic teachings is the main motivation. Easy access to content digital preaching has make it easier teenager For find guide and inspiration in the process of migration them. However, behind phenomenon positive this, it is necessary remember that misunderstanding about migration can bring up extreme attitude. Therefore that 's important For create an inclusive dialogue space so that Islamic values can be implemented in a way moderate and appropriate with context of the times.

In creating a dialogue space as an effort to balance the search for religious information online, the role of religious figures can be seen from various perspectives involving their roles religious authorities, spiritual guides and trusted sources of information. So that consider the teenagers information conveyed by religious figures to be more credible compared to other sources. Religious figures help teenagers interpret religious teachings in a way that is easy to understand. When teenagers search for religious information, they may find various interpretations or confusing teachings. This creates a tendency for teenagers to seek valid and trusted religious explanations through lectures or digital preaching content that can be accessed through various media and digital access.

Digital access to information for teenagers in this context is generation Z, who grew up in the digital era, have a high dependence on social media such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. These platforms are not only used entertainment, but also as a source of information, including religious information. Easy and interactive access makes social media an effective means of spreading the message and role of Islam.



The use of various digital platforms such as TikTok as a mini da'wah stage with its short and interesting video format, has become a favorite platform for young creators convey content to Through religious messages. songs, poetry, or inspirational stories, they have succeeded in attracting teenagers to learn about Islam. The next social media platform, Instagram as a visualization media with various features such as reels and instastories, allows users to share interesting visual content. Many Instagram accounts present religious content such as inspirational quotes, beautiful images related to Islam, or worship tutorials. Then the next social media platform, YouTube as a learning platform that offers more indepth religious content, such as lectures, studies, and religious tutorials. Many YouTube channels are managed by clerics, preachers, or Islamic communities that provide various kinds of religious content (Azizah et al., 2023).

Through various social media platforms, individual perceptions in understanding religion vary, influenced by environmental, educational and cultural factors. This includes differences in how to worship, gender roles in Islam, and views on social issues. When students with diverse understandings meet at school, these differences can lead to differences in perception that have the potential to trigger conflict. In addition, the extent to which they internalize religious values in everyday life is also influenced by their respective understandings interpretations which can vary depending on their background (Jannah, 2023).

Individual independent research has led to various different understandings, as effort religious validate understanding, the role of local religious figures has an important role as a source of information for the community. They function as spiritual leaders, educators and liaisons between religious teachings and the daily practices of the community. Local figures such as ustadz are often considered authorities who have in-depth knowledge religious teachings. Because their positions are respected, they become the main reference for people seeking answers to religious questions including matters of worship, morals and sharia law. People usually trust religious information conveyed by local figures more because they understand the local cultural and customary context which makes it easier for them to convey religious teachings according to the needs of the community (Zuhri et al., 2024).

" If I usually find out, I am a person who likes to compare things. So if I don't agree with something, I will try to think about it first and not take it straight away. After I have thought about it, I might ask several Ustads, not just one. So I compare which opinion is the most relevant, for example, the one that is most accepted and based on the Qur'an and Sunnah. If, for example, the opinion is limited to egoism and also, for example, only lust, I don't take it, I don't reject it, but I don't like that opinion. " (S21)

The search for religious information was carried out showing the attitude of using a triangulation strategy by comparing information from various sources such as different ustadz to test the validity and of suitability the information with authentic religious teachings. The information obtained was not immediately accepted, especially if the information was not in accordance with his understanding or was not supported by an authoritative source. Information that was deemed less in accordance with religious principles or based on egoism or lust was first collected and then retested through discussions with other ustadz. This shows a delay in assessment where the final decision was



taken after obtaining more comprehensive view.

CONCLUSION

Religious information searches among adolescents in the digital era show that they are increasingly independent, critical and interactive in searching, processing and evaluating information. Adolescents tend to have critical assessing in the information they encounter. The behavior of searching for religious information among adolescents in the digital era is more independent and reflective with a combination of digital technology and references to religious figures authoritative sources. This change shows the adaptation of adolescents to more open information, as well as the challenge of ensuring that the information received remains accurate and in accordance with the correct religious teachings. The shift from conventional to digital sources of information, society is increasingly dependent on the internet, social media, and other digital platforms to meet the need for religious information. importance of the role of religious figures, although access to information is getting easier, the role of religious figures as a trusted source of information and spiritual guides is still very relevant. The role of social media, social media has become a platform for the rapid and widespread dissemination of religious information. However, this also raises challenges such as the spread of inaccurate information and radicalism. The importance of digital literacy for society, especially adolescents need to have good digital literacy in order to filter correct and relevant information. The role of religious institutions that have an important role in maintaining the quality of religious content circulating in

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