

Leveraging Digital Literacy for Student Advancement in Elementary Education: From Access to Empowerment

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ABSTRACT

In the modern educational landscape, the integration of digital technology into the lives of elementary school students is both inevitable and increasingly influential. However, the effective use of such technology hinges on a strong foundation in digital literacy, which equips students to navigate digital environments responsibly and productively. This study examines the pivotal role digital literacy plays in supporting the multidimensional development of primary school learners through a systematic literature review. Sixteen articles published between 2017 and 2023 were analyzed, sourced from SINTA-accredited journals (levels 1–5) and international conference proceedings. The review reveals that digital literacy contributes significantly to various areas of student development, including moral discernment, analytical and creative thinking, fine and gross motor skills, early bilingual competencies, social collaboration, and emotional articulation. Moreover, the findings emphasize the critical role of adult involvement—particularly from teachers and parents—in mediating students' engagement with digital media. With proper guidance, technology can become a powerful tool for enhancing both academic and personal growth in elementary education settings.

Keywords: digital literacy, elementary school, students, systematic literature review.

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PENDAHULUAN

The emergence of Generation Alpha, born between 2011 and 2023, has introduced a cohort of elementary school students who are deeply immersed in digital environments from an early age. This generation is recognized for their familiarity and skill in navigating various forms of digital technology, and research suggests that their cognitive abilities may surpass those of previous generations (Yasa & Rahayu, 2023). In Indonesia, data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS, 2022) reveals that 33.44% of students in this age group are proficient in using mobile phones, while 24.96% are capable of independently accessing the internet (Saleh & Solihin, 2023). These students can operate digital devices such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, and smart TVs with remarkable ease, often learning through observation rather than formal instruction. Their exposure to technology allows them to intuitively grasp the features and functions of digital tools simply by watching adults use them (Peng & Yu, 2022; Suwarjo et al., 2022).

The most frequent use of digital media among elementary students includes watching videos and playing games, particularly through mobile devices like smartphones and tablets. A 2021 survey

conducted by Neurosensum Indonesia reported that students aged 7 to 9 most commonly accessed platforms such as YouTube (78%), WhatsApp (61%), Instagram (54%), Facebook (54%), and Twitter (12%) (Marnita et al., 2023). Among these, YouTube stands out as the most dominant platform, reflecting its wide appeal and influence on students's daily digital habits. While such platforms offer entertainment and educational potential, they also raise concerns regarding the quality and appropriateness of content consumed by students. This highlights the necessity for a structured approach to digital media use in educational settings and at home (Lazonder et al., 2020; Peng & Yu, 2022; Yasa & Rahayu, 2023).

Although digital exposure is widespread, it must be guided wisely to ensure that technology supports rather than hinders student development. In this context, digital literacy emerges as a foundational competency. It encompasses the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to interact effectively and responsibly with digital content. For elementary students, digital literacy includes understanding how to search for credible information, distinguishing between trustworthy and misleading sources, communicating respectfully online, and using digital tools for creative and educational purposes (Amelia et al., 2021; Lazonder et al., 2020; Marnita et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2017). When these competencies are taught early, students are better prepared to navigate the complexities of the digital world and to harness technology for constructive outcomes.

Concerns continue to grow about the negative impact of unregulated digital media use on students. Parents and educators often express anxiety about the possibility of students encountering harmful content such as violence or pornography, as well as the risk of developing addictive behaviors that may impair their social and emotional growth. In response, many families adopt digital parenting strategies, setting screen-time limits and establishing rules for responsible device use (Haryanto et al., 2022a; Stormo Walder, 2019; Thompson et al., 2019). However, these external controls must be complemented by internal awareness and understanding, which only digital literacy can provide. When students are equipped with critical digital skills, they are more likely to engage in positive, safe, and purposeful media practices (Xie et al., 2021).

Despite these risks, digital media also presents unique opportunities for enriching the learning experiences of elementary school students (Fakhrudin & ., 2023; Yang et al., 2021). Properly selected and supervised digital resources can support academic development, particularly in language acquisition and concept comprehension (Sulasma, 2022). For instance, educational videos, digital storytelling, and interactive apps can help students expand their vocabulary, understand abstract ideas, and reinforce classroom lessons. In addition, technology enables personalized learning, allowing students to progress at their own pace and revisit materials when needed. Through guided use, digital tools can serve not only as supplements to traditional teaching but as powerful enablers of student engagement and motivation (Nuroh & Liansari, 2018).

This study emphasizes that the effectiveness of digital technology in supporting student growth depends largely on the presence of digital literacy. A lack of digital literacy leaves students vulnerable to misinformation, manipulation, and inappropriate content, which may affect their mental health and development. Conversely, when digital literacy is integrated into the educational framework, students are empowered to critically analyze content, engage in meaningful digital communication, and make informed decisions in their media consumption. Therefore, embedding digital literacy into elementary school curricula is a strategic investment in students' long-term academic and personal success. It prepares them not only to survive but to thrive in an increasingly digital society.

Moreover, digital literacy plays a vital role in promoting development across various domains of a child's growth. From a moral standpoint, it enables students to identify ethical and unethical behaviors in digital interactions (Haryanto et al., 2022b). Cognitively, it enhances their analytical reasoning and problem-solving abilities. It can also support fine motor development through interactions with touch-based devices. In terms of language and communication, exposure to diverse media content helps students acquire new vocabulary and express themselves with greater clarity (Hutagalung & Purbani, 2021; Kuntarto & Prakash, 2020). Socially and emotionally, digital platforms offer opportunities for collaboration, empathy, and self-expression, all of which are essential components of holistic education.

As digital technologies become more integrated into everyday life, equipping elementary school students with strong digital literacy skills becomes an educational imperative (Suwanto et al., 2022). With appropriate guidance from teachers and parents, digital literacy enables students to explore the digital world safely and productively. It functions not only as a safeguard against digital threats but also as a gateway to enriched learning experiences, creativity, and social development. This review supports the idea that digital literacy is not a luxury but a necessity in modern education. By cultivating these skills early on, educators and caregivers can ensure that technology serves as a tool for empowerment and lifelong learning.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research approach using the systematic literature review (SLR) method. SLR is a structured methodology used to identify, evaluate, collect, and analyze data from relevant existing research (Page, McKenzie, Bossuyt, Boutron, Hoffmann, Mulrow, Shamseer, Tetzlaff, Akl, et al., 2021; Xiao & Watson, 2019). The use of SLR allows researchers to build a comprehensive understanding of a topic while maintaining objectivity and transparency in the research process. The strength of this method lies in its ability to present a synthesized and unbiased overview of existing knowledge (Page, McKenzie, Bossuyt, Boutron, Hoffmann, Mulrow, Shamseer,

Tetzlaff, & Moher, 2021). The systematic nature of this approach is particularly beneficial when the aim is to advance scholarly insight on a specific theme, such as the role of digital literacy in elementary education. This study follows three primary stages of the SLR process: planning, execution, and reporting.

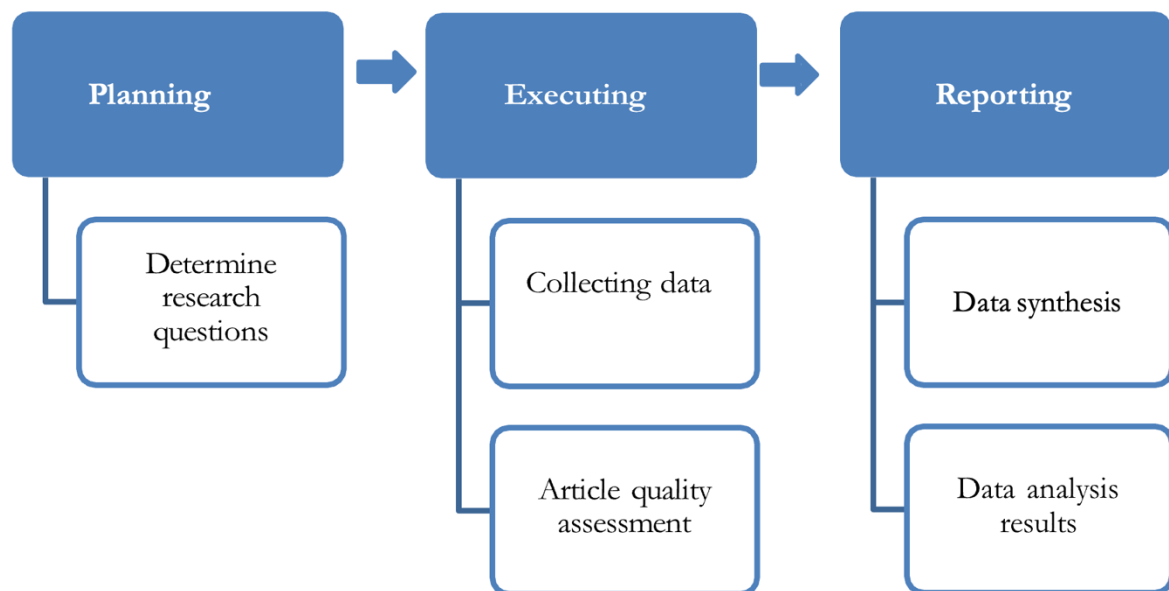


Figure 1. Stages of Systematic Literature Review

The first stage of the systematic review process involves careful planning, starting with the formulation of a clear research question. In this study, the research question posed is: “How does digital literacy contribute to supporting elementary school students' development through the use of technology?” This question is designed to explore the integration of digital literacy and technology in the educational experiences of young learners. By investigating this connection, the study seeks to uncover ways digital tools and literacy skills can be aligned to foster students’s growth across multiple developmental dimensions, including moral, cognitive, language, motor, social, and emotional aspects. The clarity of the research question sets a strong foundation for a focused and meaningful literature review process (Tinmaz et al., 2022).

The second phase is the execution of the study, which centers on data collection through an article search process. The search was conducted via Google Scholar using keywords related to technology and child development. Initially, 50 articles were retrieved. These articles then underwent a screening process based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria limited the review to studies published between 2017 and 2023, ensuring the relevance and recency of the findings to current educational contexts. Additionally, only articles published in SINTA-accredited journals (levels 1–5) or presented at international conferences were considered. The exclusion criteria involved

selecting studies written in both Indonesian and English to maintain accessibility and comprehensiveness for local and global relevance (Xiao & Watson, 2019).

To ensure the quality and relevance of the selected literature, three key assessment criteria were applied. First, each article had to clearly outline its research methodology. Second, the study needed to discuss the use of technology in relation to child development. Third, the results of the study had to offer substantive findings that could contribute meaningfully to the understanding of digital literacy's role in education. After this rigorous evaluation process, 16 articles met all the criteria and were deemed suitable for inclusion in the systematic review. These articles formed the primary data set used for further analysis in this study.

The third and final stage of the SLR process is reporting, which involves presenting the results in a coherent written format. This step includes synthesizing the data gathered from the selected articles, summarizing their key findings, and interpreting how those findings relate to the research question (Page, McKenzie, Bossuyt, Boutron, Hoffmann, Mulrow, Shamseer, Tetzlaff, Akl, et al., 2021). The goal is to identify common themes, trends, and insights across the literature that highlight the impact of digital literacy on elementary school students' development. This stage is crucial for drawing meaningful conclusions and forming a solid theoretical basis for further research or practical application in educational settings.

In organizing and managing references, the Zotero application was utilized. Zotero played a vital role in streamlining the citation process, allowing for the efficient storage, retrieval, and formatting of bibliographic data (Tinmaz et al., 2022). This tool also supported the proper documentation of the sources cited throughout the review, ensuring academic integrity and enhancing the overall credibility of the research. The use of Zotero enabled the researcher to maintain accuracy in referencing and construct a comprehensive bibliography aligned with scholarly standards.

By combining a well-structured research design, rigorous article selection, and systematic analysis, this study provides a reliable overview of the existing knowledge on digital literacy in elementary education (Xiao & Watson, 2019). The application of the systematic literature review method not only enhances the study's transparency and objectivity but also ensures that the findings are built on a solid and credible evidence base. Through this methodological framework, the study offers insights into how digital literacy can be leveraged to support student development and contributes to the ongoing discourse on effective technology integration in primary education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of the 16 selected articles, it is evident that digital literacy, when integrated with the use of technology, plays a significant role in supporting the overall development of elementary school students. The findings suggest that digital literacy has the potential to enhance

multiple aspects of student growth, including moral, cognitive, language, physical-motor, and socio-emotional development. This article focuses on how digital literacy, when properly implemented and guided, can serve as a valuable tool in shaping students' abilities and behaviors in a digitalized learning environment. Each developmental domain is influenced by how well students can engage with digital content critically and responsibly.

Table 1. Article's Data

Author(s)	Research Objective	Research Findings
(Yasa & Rahayu, 2023)	To analyze teachers' digital literacy in improving elementary students' cognitive skills.	The study found that teachers' digital literacy enhances students' cognitive development.
(Saleh & Solihin, 2023)	To explore the role of YouTube as a learning medium in supporting the cognitive development of elementary school students.	YouTube can be effectively used to optimize cognitive development among elementary students.
(Marnita et al., 2023; Peng & Yu, 2022)	To examine the correlation between watching educational cartoon videos and cognitive development among elementary school students at Pancir, Blitar Regency.	The study revealed significant differences in cognitive development based on the type of cartoon watched, with the highest cognitive outcomes found in students who watched educational cartoons like Upin-Ipin.
(Riwanto & Budiarti, 2020)	To explore the impact of digital media on the socio-emotional development of elementary school students at SDN 46 Kendari, focusing on its educational value and influence on teaching motivation.	Digital media positively affects students' socio-emotional growth, demonstrated by increased enthusiasm and positive behaviors such as empathy.
(Fauzi et al., 2020)	To investigate the impact of computer games on the behavior and cognitive development of elementary students aged 6 to 11.	Survey results indicated that game content influences student behavior, while screen time affects their cognitive development.
(Inggil Rejeki et al., 2022)	To develop a valid and effective learning product to improve fine motor skills in elementary school students.	Digital media through tutorial videos significantly improved fine motor skills among students aged 6–8 years, with a significance value (2-tailed) of 0.03.
(Hadad et al., 2023)	To examine the implementation and challenges of using digital learning media in Christian elementary education at GMIM Sunday Schools.	Superbook media was found effective for student learning due to its child-appropriate content. However, challenges such as teacher preparedness remain, prompting institutions to provide support tools and training.
(Cahyani & Jayanta, 2021)	To assess the effect of physical activities such as “bebek renang” gymnastics on the gross motor skills of elementary school students.	The activity positively impacted the gross motor development of young students.
(Kumala et al., 2021)	To explore how English students' songs as a learning tool support elementary school students' vocabulary and pronunciation in Indonesia.	Watching and participating in English song activities enhanced students' vocabulary and correct pronunciation.
(Fakhrudin & ., 2023)	To evaluate the impact of motion-and-song-based educational videos on the physical motor development of elementary students.	There was a significant improvement in students' motor skills following the intervention with motion-and-song videos.
(Nuroh & Liansari, 2018)	To provide a new perspective on the use of TikTok in supporting elementary students' holistic development.	TikTok supports development in various domains including moral values (patience), motor skills (movement), cognitive skills (memorization, vocabulary), socio-emotional expression, confidence, and artistic talents.
(Dewi, 2022)	To analyze how digital games and video platforms can enhance	The study showed that platforms like YouTube have a positive effect on students' learning

	cognitive, social, and learning skills of elementary school students in the Jabodetabek area.	experiences and skill development.
(Lestari et al., 2020)	To determine the effect of YouTube videos on the speaking abilities of elementary school students.	YouTube, especially cartoons, positively influenced students' speaking skills.
(Kuntarto & Prakash, 2020)	To validate the effect of YouTube on enhancing elementary students' cognitive skills.	The study highlights the benefits of digital technology like YouTube in developing cognitive knowledge among students.
(Suwanto et al., 2022)	To describe the effects of online gaming on the socio-emotional development of elementary school students at Al-Mukhlisin Elementary School, West Pasaman.	YouTube supports cognitive development, while online games may promote collaboration but also pose risks such as imitation, addiction, and aggressive behavior.
(Sulasmai, 2022)	To analyze the influence of the animated film Omar and Hana on the religious and moral development of elementary students.	The film teaches moral and religious values and uses Islamic songs to help students understand messages more easily.

Digital literacy refers to an individual's capacity to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide range of digital sources (Saripudin et al., 2022). This includes not only the technical ability to operate digital devices but also the cognitive awareness to interpret and evaluate digital content. It encompasses understanding how to search for credible information, how to communicate ethically through digital channels, and how to recognize potential digital threats. In today's fast-evolving technological world, digital literacy has become a necessary life skill—especially for young students who are growing up in a media-saturated environment (Erwin & Mohammed, 2022; Ramadhan et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2015). Their ability to navigate these platforms wisely will influence both their academic performance and social behavior.

Furthermore, digital literacy is closely linked to the growing need for technological awareness and media discernment. Digital literacy reflects an individual's sensitivity to technological changes and the implications these may have in everyday life. Without proper literacy, students may misuse digital platforms, leading to exposure to harmful content or the spread of misinformation (Sun et al., 2017). The increasing prevalence of fake news and the critical need for users—regardless of age—to develop the skill of evaluating the reliability of information before sharing it (Moreno-Morilla et al., 2021; Yasa & Rahayu, 2023). Teaching digital literacy from an early age equips students with the tools to make informed choices and participate in digital spaces safely and constructively.

In the context of elementary education, digital literacy is not merely about limiting screen time or controlling access to content—it involves guiding students to understand both the opportunities and risks associated with digital media (Suwarjo et al., 2022). The importance of introducing digital literacy at the school level to help students recognize the impact of excessive gadget use, including issues related to attention span, dependency, and behavioral changes (Peng & Yu, 2022; Suwarjo et al., 2022). When digital media is used without guidance, students may adopt passive or harmful media

habits. However, when educators and parents actively teach digital literacy, students learn to use technology purposefully—for learning, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Digital Literacy in the Aspect of Moral Development

Moral development in elementary school students is a critical aspect of their overall growth, as it shapes their understanding of right and wrong, and guides their behavior in accordance with social and cultural norms. Moral values provide a strong foundation for students to develop habits of ethical conduct and virtuous actions. Moral development involves individual behaviors that align with prevailing norms, helping students form the character traits necessary for living harmoniously in society (Lapsley & Woodbury, 2016). At the primary school level, this development becomes especially important, as students begin to internalize societal expectations and practice moral reasoning in their daily interactions with peers and adults.

Digital media has emerged as a powerful tool for introducing and reinforcing moral and religious values among students, particularly through educational content tailored to their developmental stage. For instance, animated series like *Omar and Hana* on YouTube deliver meaningful moral lessons by narrating stories rooted in Islamic teachings (Sulasmi, 2022). These episodes emphasize values such as honesty, gratitude, cooperation, cleanliness, and avoiding wastefulness, all of which are essential for fostering a morally upright mindset. Similarly, Christian-based digital media like *Superbook* presents stories from religious texts that contrast good and bad behavior in a manner that resonates with young viewers, encouraging them to reflect on their own actions.

Other YouTube channels, such as *Diva the Series*, *Nussa Official*, *Riko the Series*, and songs from *Lagu Anak Indonesia Balita*, also contribute to moral development by embedding lessons in culturally relevant, age-appropriate content. These channels creatively present themes such as kindness, helping others, respecting parents, and practicing patience—core values that students are encouraged to adopt and apply in their daily lives. By using music, colorful visuals, and relatable characters, these platforms succeed in capturing students' attention while simultaneously instilling positive messages that align with family and religious teachings (Hsu et al., 2019).

It is crucial, however, that the digital content accessed by students be carefully curated to ensure it aligns with their developmental needs and moral understanding. The importance of providing age-appropriate and relevant media that can enrich students' understanding of moral values (Purnama et al., 2021). Content should be selected not only for entertainment purposes but also for its potential to reinforce everyday behaviors that reflect ethical and spiritual teachings. When students engage with such content consistently, it supports their ability to distinguish between desirable and undesirable behaviors and apply moral lessons in real-life situations, such as sharing with friends, telling the truth, or showing gratitude.

Digital literacy in the moral domain plays a vital role in guiding elementary school students toward ethical behavior in a digitally influenced world. With the right support from parents and educators, students can be introduced to digital platforms that promote moral reasoning and religious understanding (Hadad et al., 2023). Rather than shielding students entirely from digital media, it is more beneficial to direct them toward positive content that aligns with moral education goals (Nuroh & Liansari, 2018). By doing so, digital technology becomes not a threat, but a tool for nurturing a generation of morally aware, responsible, and spiritually grounded individuals.

Digital Literacy in the Aspect of Cognitive Development

Cognitive development is a fundamental aspect of a child's growth, as it encompasses the ability to think, analyze, remember, solve problems, and make decisions. In the context of elementary school students, digital literacy plays a crucial role in stimulating these cognitive functions. As students engage with digital platforms, their curiosity and creativity are naturally piqued, encouraging them to explore and process new information. According to Lestari, introducing digital literacy to students at an early age enhances their cognitive development by fostering a mindset that is both inquisitive and imaginative (Lestari et al., 2020). Digital tools, when used appropriately, become catalysts for intellectual engagement and mental agility.

Students's frequent interactions with digital media, particularly through watching videos and playing games, present multiple opportunities for cognitive stimulation. When students watch animated videos or engage in interactive games, their brains are actively working to process and interpret the information presented. This activity not only exercises their memory but also strengthens their analytical and creative thinking abilities. Engagements help students develop problem-solving skills by allowing them to experience decision-making scenarios in a playful context (Suwanto et al., 2022). Moreover, the visual and auditory stimulation provided by cartoons or educational videos enhances memory retention, as approximately 94% of information processed by the brain is influenced by visual and auditory experiences (Hutagalung & Purbani, 2021).

The cognitive benefits of digital media extend beyond passive consumption. Studies have shown that even toddlers, through watching video content on platforms like YouTube, begin to develop imaginative capabilities by interpreting and interacting with their surroundings in new ways inspired by what they watch (Kuntarto & Prakash, 2020). For elementary-aged students, educational computer games can significantly improve their understanding of academic concepts. Nuroh and Liansari report that these types of digital games can enhance cognitive development by up to 74.4%, as they simplify abstract concepts into engaging, hands-on activities (Nuroh & Liansari, 2018). This level of interactivity fosters deeper learning, and students become more capable of grasping complex ideas, enhancing their school performance and confidence in learning.

Parental observations support these findings. Fakhruddin notes that nine out of ten parents have observed a positive impact on their students's learning experiences after using educational digital tools (Fakhruddin & ., 2023). These benefits include increased attention span, improved logical reasoning, and better problem-solving capabilities. When students are exposed to high-quality, age-appropriate content, digital technology becomes a powerful ally in supporting academic and intellectual growth. However, these outcomes are not automatic; they require intentional choices about what types of content students engage with and how much time they spend using digital devices.

Therefore, it is essential for parents and educators to actively guide students's digital experiences. This involves teaching students how to select appropriate content, recommending educational apps and games, and setting time limits—ideally no more than 50 minutes per session—to prevent overstimulation and promote balance (Fakhruddin & ., 2023; Kumala et al., 2021; Nuroh & Liansari, 2018). Additionally, while digital tools offer tremendous cognitive benefits, they should not replace social interactions. Students must still be encouraged to play and communicate with peers in real-world settings, which helps them apply what they learn digitally to real-life contexts. By balancing digital exposure with social and environmental exploration, students can achieve more holistic cognitive development.

Digital Literacy in the Aspect of Physical Motor Development

Physical motor development refers to a child's ability to perform coordinated bodily movements that involve both large and small muscle groups, integrating the muscular and nervous systems to execute purposeful actions. This domain includes gross motor skills such as jumping, running, and dancing, as well as fine motor skills like cutting, writing, or folding paper. As highlighted by Marhaeni, motor development is essential in shaping students's physical capabilities and directly supports their independence and daily functioning (Marhaeni et al., 2022). With the increasing role of technology in students's lives, digital literacy is proving to be not only a cognitive and social tool but also one that can support physical development.

Digital literacy, when applied meaningfully, can contribute to motor skill development among elementary school students. Through interactive and movement-based media—such as videos of students's songs accompanied by choreography—students are encouraged to imitate physical actions that align with the music's rhythm and lyrics. These songs, which may be in Indonesian or English, require coordination of movement, rhythm, and listening skills, thereby stimulating both gross motor and neurological responses (Saleh & Solihin, 2023). Dancing along with digital song content or participating in guided exercise videos offers an enjoyable and engaging way for students to enhance their physical fitness while developing spatial awareness, balance, and muscle control.

Physical activities inspired by digital media, such as morning exercises or dance routines, are not only entertaining but also have tangible benefits for students's physical growth and motor coordination. Consistent participation in structured movement activities—such as group exercises facilitated by videos—can lead to improvements in students's overall motor development and physical health (Sun et al., 2017). These forms of digital engagement are especially valuable in indoor learning settings or during periods when outdoor activity is limited, allowing students to stay physically active in safe and structured environments.

In addition to gross motor development, fine motor skills can also be enhanced through digital learning materials. Educational video tutorials that guide students through crafts like paper folding, drawing, or cutting involve precise hand movements and eye-hand coordination. When students watch these tutorials and attempt to replicate the activities, they strengthen their fine motor control by manipulating tools such as scissors, pencils, or glue. Hendraningrat and Fauziah (2021) emphasize that following along with such visual instructions helps students refine their dexterity and concentration, which are foundational for tasks like handwriting, using utensils, or managing personal hygiene.

Digital Literacy in the Aspect of Language Development

Language development in students refers to their ability to comprehend (receptive) and express (expressive) information, both orally and in written form. It involves four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Marnita et al., 2023). These abilities form the foundation for effective communication and are essential for academic success and social interaction. As students grow, exposure to rich language environments—whether through conversations, reading sessions, or multimedia—plays a significant role in shaping their linguistic proficiency. Thus, digital literacy has emerged as a crucial tool in supporting the advancement of language skills in today's digital era, particularly when students engage with content that is structured, educational, and designed for language stimulation.

When students interact with digital platforms, especially for viewing content such as educational videos or animated stories, it is important to ensure that the material promotes language development. Positive digital content should include clear narration, enriched vocabulary, and messages that are both informative and morally constructive (Maulid & Sakti, 2022). Videos that explain new concepts, tell stories with moral lessons, or teach language structures can support comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. Moreover, digital content that is accompanied by subtitles, visual cues, and repetition helps reinforce word recognition and pronunciation, making it easier for students to associate words with meaning and context.

One of the most effective ways to maximize the language benefits of digital media is through active adult involvement. Instead of allowing passive consumption, parents or educators should engage students in two-way communication during or after screen time. For instance, asking questions about the video's content, encouraging students to retell the story, or discussing the moral of a cartoon episode can significantly boost a child's expressive skills and critical thinking (Hsu et al., 2019). Furthermore, watching digital content in more than one language—such as Indonesian and English—has been shown to foster early bilingual development. Riwanto and Budiarti found that even toddlers could begin to understand and pronounce words in both languages accurately when guided by adults during bilingual media exposure (Riwanto & Budiarti, 2020).

As students connect what they see and hear in digital media to their everyday lives, their language skills are enhanced not just in vocabulary acquisition, but also in their ability to communicate thoughts and emotions clearly. This process of internalizing and expressing information promotes cognitive-linguistic development and empowers students to engage more meaningfully with the world around them. With mindful guidance and appropriate digital content, digital literacy becomes a bridge for students to develop strong, flexible, and expressive language abilities, essential for their holistic growth.

Digital Literacy in Social Emotional Development Aspects

Social and emotional development in students encompasses two vital domains of growth. Social development refers to a child's ability to communicate, interact, and collaborate effectively with peers and adults in their environment. Emotional development, on the other hand, involves the child's capacity to recognize, express, and regulate their own emotions (Fauzi et al., 2020). These aspects are interwoven and essential for fostering healthy relationships, building empathy, and establishing emotional resilience. In today's digital age, digital literacy plays a significant role in supporting and enhancing these competencies, especially when students engage with thoughtfully curated digital content.

Digital literacy can positively influence students's social-emotional development by helping them interact with their surroundings and appropriately express emotions through digital tools. Educational videos that portray the lives of prophets, stories of heroism, and inspirational narratives have been shown to foster increased empathy and emotional engagement in students. According to Budiarti and Adar (2023), students exposed to such stories often display heightened enthusiasm, compassion, and a deeper understanding of moral values. In addition, interactive media such as online games promote collaboration and teamwork by encouraging students to work together toward shared goals, often in real-time problem-solving environments (Purnama et al., 2021). Platforms like TikTok also contribute to this development by allowing students to express their emotions visually, build

confidence, and explore hidden talents in creative and expressive ways (Cahyani & Jayanta, 2021; Kumala et al., 2021)

Furthermore, media content that includes emotionally expressive characters—such as animated figures that demonstrate joy, sadness, disappointment, or excitement—can enhance a child’s emotional vocabulary and empathy. As students tend to imitate the behaviors they observe, watching characters navigate emotional situations can teach them constructive ways to manage their own feelings (Nuroh & Liansari, 2018). By mirroring appropriate emotional responses and engaging in reflective discussions about them, students gradually learn how to interpret and regulate their emotions in real-life scenarios. Therefore, with intentional guidance and carefully selected digital content, digital literacy becomes an invaluable tool for nurturing the social and emotional development of primary school students.

CONCLUSIONS

Digital literacy plays a crucial role in supporting students’s development across multiple domains. In terms of moral development, it helps students distinguish between right and wrong based on religious and ethical values. Cognitively, digital literacy aids in processing information, fostering analytical and creative thinking, enhancing problem-solving skills, and improving memory. In the physical-motor domain, it stimulates coordination between muscles and the nervous system through technology-based activities. It also supports language development, including the early acquisition of bilingual abilities. Regarding social and emotional growth, students learn the value of cooperation, how to express their emotions, build self-confidence, and discover hidden talents. Adults have a vital responsibility in guiding and supervising students’s engagement with digital content. Their role includes ensuring that the materials students access are educational and age-appropriate. With proper adult support, students can learn to evaluate information critically, process it thoughtfully, and communicate their ideas effectively. In this way, digital literacy not only strengthens students’s technical skills in using technology but also contributes holistically to their moral, cognitive, physical, linguistic, and emotional development.

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