

EXPLORE THE DIGITAL WORLD SAFELY AND SMARTLY FOR A BETTER FUTURE

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Received : 21 June 2025

Published : 20 August 2025

Revised : 30 June 2025

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.54443/irpitage.v5i2.3179>

Accepted : 17 July 2025

Publish link : <https://radjapublika.com/index.php/IRPITAGE/>

Abstract

In the digital era that continues to advance, the use of information technology has become an inseparable part of everyday life, including in the field of education. However, this development also presents a number of challenges, especially for the younger generation who are still in the process of growing and searching for their identity. Many students do not fully understand the importance of ethics in the digital world, security in cyberspace, and how to use the internet wisely and positively. This activity is designed in the form of interactive socialization, short training, and discussion and question and answer sessions that involve the active participation of students. The material provided includes an introduction to the digital world, the threat of cybercrime such as online bullying, online fraud, and the spread of hoaxes, how to maintain the security of personal data, and the application of ethics in using the internet. In addition, students are also encouraged to recognize the potential of the digital world as a means of learning, channeling creativity, and developing themselves. Through a communicative and fun approach, this activity aims to encourage students to be wiser in using digital devices and social media. Participants will also be equipped with the ability to become digital literacy agents in their respective environments. This community service activity is in line with the national character building and digital literacy program, and supports the school's vision in forming a generation that is able to adapt to the development of the times without abandoning strong moral and social values. With the presence of technology, several suggestions can be put forward, one of which is the importance of early digital literacy development. Junior high school students are at an age that is vulnerable to the negative impacts of the digital world. Therefore, there needs to be routine digital literacy training and education in schools, so that students can understand both the benefits and risks of using technology. In addition, collaboration between schools and universities is also needed. Community service activities like this emphasize the importance of synergy between higher education institutions and schools in forming a generation that is literate and skilled in the digital world.

Keywords: *Digital Literacy, Educational Technology, Digital Ethics, Community Service, Cyber Security, Teenagers and Technology*

INTRODUCTION

SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe is located on Jln. Tgk. Su Ud, Blang Pulo, Muara Satu District, Lhokseumawe City, Aceh Province. This school is one of the junior high school educational institutions that has a strategic role in shaping character and providing basic knowledge for the younger generation in today's digital era. Located in an urban area with a high level of internet access, students at SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe have easy access to digital devices and internet networks. However, this progress has not been fully balanced with a sufficient understanding of digital literacy, ethics in the use of technology, and the ability to protect oneself in cyberspace. This situation raises various issues, such as low student awareness in maintaining personal data privacy, the tendency to use social media unwisely, and the increased risk of exposure to negative content and digital crime. These conditions can have an impact on the psychological, social, and academic aspects of students, as well as affecting the overall school climate. In response to these challenges, we as a community service team initiated an educational approach through a digital literacy program themed "Exploring the Digital World Safely and Smartly for a Better Future." This program aims to equip students with basic understanding and skills in utilizing information technology wisely, safely, and responsibly. The materials presented cover topics such as cybersecurity,

ethics in interacting in the digital world, positive use of social media, and optimizing the internet as a useful learning medium.



Figure 1. Activities

In implementing this program, we emphasize the importance of being ethical in social media, such as maintaining good manners, respecting differences, and avoiding cyberbullying and spreading hoaxes. Students are encouraged to truly utilize digital technology positively. Collaboration with schools and the implementation of interactive educational methods, such as socialization and discussion, are expected to strengthen students' resilience in facing various challenges in the digital era. The topic "Exploring the Digital World Safely and Smartly for a Better Future" was raised in community service activities at SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe based on the fact that digital technology has become an inseparable part of everyday life, including in the field of education. Students, especially junior high school students, are a generation born and raised in the digital era so that they become active users of the internet and social media. However, the high intensity of use of this technology has not been balanced with adequate understanding of wise, safe, and responsible use.

Many students still do not have sufficient skills in filtering information, identifying risks in the digital world, and protecting their personal data. They are also vulnerable to various negative impacts of technology use, such as addiction to digital devices, the spread of fake news (hoaxes), cyberbullying, and access to content that is not appropriate for their age. The lack of formal education related to digital literacy in schools makes students tend to use technology freely without proper control or understanding. Therefore, it is very important for students to gain knowledge and digital literacy skills to be able to explore the digital world safely and intelligently. Digital literacy does not only include technical skills in operating devices, but also includes an understanding of ethics in cyberspace, internet security, and the use of technology for positive and productive purposes. This topic is very relevant as a form of active contribution in supporting the transformation of the education system and forming a generation that is ready to face the challenges of the digital era. This activity also supports the government's program in strengthening character and developing 21st century competencies, such as critical thinking, cooperation, communication, and technology-based creativity. In addition, this theme is also in line with the goals of sustainable development (SDGs), especially in terms of improving the quality of education and developing innovation. Through proper education for students of SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe, it is hoped that they can become technology users who are not only capable, but also have an awareness of their responsibilities in the digital world, and are able to utilize technology as a means to achieve a better future.

METHOD

Activity Implementation Method

Implementation methods include survey activities, socialization and education for students, implementation of digital technology in order to develop safe and intelligent sustainable programs to realize a better future.

Activity Implementation Stage

The following are the stages of activities carried out:

Stages	Information
Stage Planning Beginning (May 14, 2025)	1. Survey identify Condition of SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe School 2. Coordination with teachers or other parties concerned JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL Country 8 Lhokseumawe 3. Socialization related objective programs and the importance of digital world security for students
Stage Introduction And Socialization (May 15, 2025)	1. Introducing how to use technology digital with safe and smart 2. Socialization to student regarding the importance of digital literacy and the risks of unwise internet use. 3. Session interactive in the form of session Q&A or sharing (discussion) regarding use of digital media Which safe and responsible.
Stage Evaluation And Monitoring (May 15, 2025)	1. Evaluate students' understanding of through session question and answer. 2. Identification impact negative and positive about Digital Security. 3. Reflective discussion with students regarding security digital and what suggestions do you have? should possible to do

Completion and Achievement of Activity Objectives

The main problem identified is the low understanding of students regarding ethics and security in the use of the internet and digital technology. Therefore, this program focuses on improving digital literacy and character building of students so that they are able to face the digital era positively and responsibly. Through active participation from schools and students in every stage of the activity, it is hoped that a learning environment will be created that supports the wise and productive use of technology. The program's achievements include increasing student awareness of the importance of digital security, increasing teacher skills in integrating technology into learning, and creating a healthy and positive digital culture in the school environment. The main strategies implemented include: strengthening digital literacy, increasing security in internet use, and fostering positive character in digital life.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**Potential and Initial Conditions of Target**

SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe is one of the state schools with great potential in character development and increasing students' digital literacy. This school has a large number of students and is supported by educators who actively participate in various technology-based training. Given these conditions, educational efforts are needed that focus on improving students' understanding of digital literacy and internet ethics. The school also shows full support for the implementation of the program which aims to equip students to be better prepared to face challenges in the digital era in a smart and responsible way. However, based on the results of initial observations, there are still many students who do not understand the importance of using the internet safely and wisely. Most students often use social media without paying attention to digital ethical norms and are not yet able to sort valid information from fake news (hoaxes). In addition, there is a tendency for students to become addicted to gadgets such as playing games excessively which has an impact on decreasing concentration in learning and decreasing productivity in the learning process.

Process of Implementing Socialization Activities

This community service activity is carried out through three main stages, namely the preparation, implementation, and evaluation stages. The target is grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe. The initial stage begins with coordination with the school to determine the activity schedule, target participants, and the material to be delivered. Furthermore, socialization and counseling are carried out which emphasize digital literacy, ethics in social media, and personal data protection. The activity entitled "Exploring the Digital World Safely and Smartly for a Better Future" was held on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe. The event was opened with remarks from school representatives and the implementing team, then continued with the presentation of materials by the Master of Ceremony (MC) and other event section teams.



Figure 2. Presentation of material regarding the Digital World

The material presented includes a basic introduction to the digital world, ethics in using social media, how to recognize fake news (hoaxes), and the importance of maintaining privacy and security of personal data on the internet. The delivery is done interactively through presentation media, group discussions, and question and answer sessions. Participants are also involved in interactive discussions to train critical thinking skills and foster a wise attitude in the use of technology. The activity was closed with the giving of prizes to students who actively participated in the question and answer session. Overall, the implementation of the activity went smoothly and received positive responses from students and accompanying teachers. Students looked enthusiastic and actively involved in every series of events held.

Results of the Implementation of Socialization Activities

This activity has succeeded in providing a positive impact on students and the school environment in terms of digital literacy and providing insight into students' knowledge or awareness in using information technology safely and intelligently, and responsibly. Some of the results achieved during the activity include:

Improvement Results	The Solution That in Apply
Increasing students' understanding of ethics digital (footsteps digital)	Through socialization activities, students understand better importance guard attitude and ethics in the digital world.
Increase ability to manage time in using gadgets.	Providing time management tips and strategies For help student more be wise in using gadgets.
Awareness of social ethics, partly student start show behavior ynag more wise in using social media.	Delivered through activity socialization regarding online ethics and its consequences
Social media usage habits, time Which spent on social media is very high without supervision and control	Students begin to consider the time of use media social And reduce excessive habits
Response And enthusiasm students, lack of outlook regarding the impact world digital to everyday life.	Students actively ask questions, discuss and demonstrate interest tall to the material provided.

Target End Condition

After the implementation of the socialization program "Exploring the Digital World Safely and Smartly for a Better Future", there were quite significant positive changes in students of SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe. Students who previously did not understand the importance of digital ethics and personal data protection are now starting to show wiser behavior and higher awareness in utilizing digital technology. A number of students reported that they had begun to limit their use of social media and were more selective in receiving and sharing information. They also showed a better understanding of the risks of unsafe internet use, such as cyberbullying, identity theft, and the spread of fake news. Post-activity conditions show an increase in careful and responsible attitudes in using the internet, especially social media. Students are now more aware of the importance of maintaining privacy, not carelessly sharing personal information, and are starting to be able to distinguish between valid and misleading information. Some students even stated that they had reduced the time they spent playing with gadgets and started using the internet for more useful things, such as accessing learning materials or searching for educational information. The school also welcomed the impact of this activity. Thus, it can be concluded that this activity has a significant influence in forming digital awareness and healthy behavior among students and the school environment in general.

CONCLUSION

Community Service Activities carried out at SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe with the theme "Exploring the Digital World Safely and Smartly for a Better Future" can be concluded as an educational initiative that has successfully provided a positive impact on students' understanding and awareness of the importance of digital literacy in the current era of information technology. Initially, most students were already accustomed to using digital devices and social media, but lacked understanding of cyber risks, such as the spread of hoaxes, cyberbullying, data theft, negative content, and the negative impacts of excessive gadget use. Through socialization activities designed with a communicative and interactive approach, students were given a deep understanding of digital ethics, personal data protection, and how to become responsible and ethical internet users.

The material presented in the form of presentations and Q&A sessions successfully attracted students' interest and increased their active participation. Students not only received information passively, but were also involved in critical reflection on their daily digital behavior. This shows that the method approach used by the implementing team is effective. Overall, this activity successfully achieved its main objective, which was to improve digital literacy among junior high school students. In addition, this activity also strengthened the partnership between higher education institutions and schools, as a real form of academic synergy and community service. The results of this activity showed that students experienced increased knowledge, wiser attitudes in using digital media, and motivation to apply what they had learned in everyday life. Thus, this activity not only functions as a means of conveying information, but also as a strategic step in forming a young generation that is digitally intelligent, has ethical awareness, and is able to become active, critical, and responsible users of technology for a better future.

Suggestion

Based on the implementation of Community Service activities at SMP Negeri 8 Lhokseumawe which carries the theme "Exploring the Digital World Safely and Smartly for a Better Future", there are a number of recommendations that can be used as input for schools, activity participants and the implementation team to optimize and maintain the sustainability of the benefits of this program. It is hoped that the school can continue to provide digital literacy education to students routinely, both through intracurricular and extracurricular activities.

In addition, schools are also advised to provide learning facilities and resources that support students' understanding of safe and responsible internet use. For students, it is important to apply the knowledge and insights they have gained during activities in their daily lives, especially in using social media and the internet wisely. To maintain the continuity of the positive impact of this activity, strategic steps are needed that focus on strengthening digital literacy as a whole, including students, educators, and the school environment in general. One of the main strategies is to integrate digital literacy materials into the curriculum consistently, especially in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) lessons or other relevant subjects.

The active involvement of teachers is also very necessary through advanced training that discusses current issues in the digital world, such as personal data protection, responsible use of social media, and potential cyber threats that often target teenagers. This capacity building will strengthen the role of schools in guiding students to

face the challenges of the digital era wisely. Participation of parents and school committees also needs to be encouraged, for example through short counseling activities or distribution of practical modules on the pattern of monitoring gadget use at home. This kind of collaborative approach is expected to be able to form a mutually supportive and sustainable digital education. In the long term, this socialization activity can be expanded to other schools in the Lhokseumawe City area, with the development of materials and methods based on the results of the evaluation of previous activities. Routine monitoring and evaluation are also important to assess the effectiveness of the program implementation on an ongoing basis. It is hoped that in the future there will be a stronger synergy between universities, schools, and local governments in realizing systematic and sustainable digital literacy policies for the future of a younger generation who are smarter and ready to face the digital era.

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