Factors of Communication Strategies for Hindu Religious Educators in The Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

The rapidly evolving digital communication in today's era has made digital-based communication strategies for religious educators increasingly crucial and relevant. With the changing behavioral patterns of a society that heavily relies on technology, especially digital platforms, in daily life, religious educators need to adapt their communication approaches to effectively reach their audience. The utilization of digital platforms, such as social media, websites, and specialized applications, presents new opportunities to convey religious messages, facilitate discussions, and build larger online communities. Therefore, the development of digital-based communication strategies for religious educators is not just a necessity but an imperative to respond to the dynamics of the times and strengthen the connection between religious messages and the continually evolving digital society. The sustainability of digital-based communication strategies for religious educators can also be measured through data analysis and feedback obtained from online interactions. Using the analytical tools available on digital platforms, religious educators can evaluate the extent to which religious messages are absorbed and understood by the audience. The aim of this research is to determine whether digital-based communication strategies for religious educators can effectively enhance understanding, engagement, and compliance with religious values and to identify factors that can influence the success of implementing digital-based communication strategies among religious educators. The data analysis technique used involves clarification, interpretation, and gradual conclusion drawing steps. The collected data is processed by selecting, analyzing, and then presented in article form. The results of this research indicate that fundamentally, Hindu religious educators have three functions: consultative and advocacy functions, informative function, and educational function. These are expected to contribute positively to the spiritual, moral, and social development of the Hindu community and strengthen religious values in daily life. Therefore, it is crucial for Hindu religious educators to understand digital-based communication strategies, which require not only technological understanding but also active community involvement, creativity in educational content, institutional support, cultural adaptation, continuous evaluation, and responsibility for change. This provides a holistic view of key factors that can influence the success of conducting religious communication through digital media.

Keywords: Strategy, Communication, Digital Communication.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is an activity frequently undertaken by every individual. In the communication process, humans exchange messages, statements, and information using language as a means of conveyance. Currently, communication skills are considered vital due to their correlation with the social impact that poses challenges to the welfare of the community due to the boundless development of the times (Sitorus, 2020). In social life, communication plays a significant role in building self-concepts, self-actualization, and fostering relationships with others. Through communication, we can collaborate with the community to achieve common goals.

Communication strategies are the best combination of communication elements, involving aspects such as the communicator, message, media used, communicant, and planned influence to achieve communication goals effectively (Prabawa, 2023). This approach indicates that to achieve optimal goals, the implementation of communication strategies can provide guidance on how an activity can be carried out practically in the field. This is because well-designed plans may undergo changes when facing different situations and conditions in the field. In other words, the goal of communication is for it to be effective.

In the rapidly evolving digital era, digital-based communication strategies for religious educators become increasingly crucial and relevant. With changes in societal behavioral patterns, relying more on technology, especially digital, in daily life, religious educators need to adapt their communication approaches to reach their audience more effectively. The use of digital platforms, such as social media, websites, and specialized applications, provides new opportunities to convey religious messages, facilitate discussions, and build larger communities online. Therefore, the development of digital-based communication strategies for religious educators is not just a necessity but an imperative to respond to the dynamics of the times and strengthen the connection between religious messages and the continually evolving digital society (Nurulita, 2021).

In this context, digital-based communication strategies for religious educators encompass various essential elements. Firstly, using social media as the main channel to convey religious messages provides an opportunity to reach a broader and diverse audience. Through these platforms, religious educators can quickly and interactively share information, religious studies, and moral messages. Secondly, developing a website or specific applications allows religious

educators to provide more in-depth content, such as articles, videos, or practical guides, accessible to the public anytime and anywhere. Furthermore, interactive features like discussion forums or online Q&A sessions can strengthen community engagement and participation in understanding religious values. Thus, digital-based communication strategies not only expand the reach of conveying religious messages but also enrich the communicative experience with a more inclusive and responsive approach to the needs of the digital community.

The sustainability of digital-based communication strategies for religious educators can also be measured through data analysis and feedback obtained from online interactions. Using analytical tools available on digital platforms, religious educators can evaluate the extent to which religious messages are absorbed and understood by the audience. Demographic data and interaction trends can serve as a basis for creating content that aligns more with the needs and interests of the community. Meanwhile, direct feedback from users through comments, messages, or participation in online polls can help religious educators be more sensitive to the dynamics of the community they serve. Using this data-driven approach, communication strategies for religious educators can be continually improved and adjusted to remain relevant amid dynamic changes in digital society. Thus, digital-based religious education efforts become not only a tool for delivering religious messages but also a responsive and effective ongoing process to support the spiritual needs of modern society (Yasa, 2020).

Facing various challenges and opportunities, religious educators can also leverage innovative features offered by digital technology. For example, conducting learning sessions or religious lectures through live streaming platforms can create an interactive and immediate experience between educators and their audience. Moreover, the integration of artificial intelligence and data security can enhance the security and quality of online services, instilling confidence in the community accessing religious information. The flexibility of time and place provided by digital-based strategies also allows religious educators to reach a geographically diverse audience without being limited by physical constraints. Therefore, religious educators need to continue developing skills and knowledge in utilizing digital technology, enabling them to make maximum contributions in meeting the spiritual and moral needs of the community in this digital era.

Thus, religious educators need to prepare for the transformation of their roles in this digital context. The research's goal is to determine whether digital-based communication strategies for religious educators can effectively enhance understanding, engagement, and compliance with religious values. Additionally, this study aims to identify factors that can influence the success of implementing digital-based communication strategies among religious educators. By understanding these dynamics, it is expected that this research will contribute valuable insights to the development of communication strategies for religious educators that can meet the demands of the digital community more effectively and relevantly.

METHODS

Hindu religious educators play a role as guides and illuminators for the Hindu community. Essentially, their duties involve providing guidance, counseling, and direction to their followers regarding religious teachings. Hindu religious educators are considered examples that can be referred to in consultations on religious matters by their followers. By leveraging the development of communication technology in society, this is considered one of the strategies for Hindu religious educators to get closer to their community. With the rapid advancement of technology, a Hindu religious educator needs to adapt to these developments. This is aimed at facilitating their followers in accessing religious information. This research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, aiming to explore phenomena, social activities, attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and thoughts of others in depth. The data analysis technique involves clarification, interpretation, and gradual conclusion-drawing steps. The collected data is processed by selecting, analyzing, and then presented in the form of a report.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The function of Hindu religious educators

Overall, the role of Hindu religious educators can be identified in three main categories, namely consultative and advocacy functions, informative function, and educational function.

1. The informative and educational functions in the task of Hindu religious educators involve providing enlightenment by presenting materials to the community they serve. To succeed in informative communication, a Hindu religious educator needs to pay attention to the selection

of materials that can capture the interest of the audience so that the topic of discussion can receive full attention from them. In delivering the teachings of Hinduism, it is important for religious educators to use language that is easily understood by the community they serve. Regarding the educational function, a Hindu religious educator is expected to continue instilling spiritual values in every material presented. The educational role is of primary importance in nurturing and guiding the community in the teachings of dharma. The sustainability of the truths conveyed by educators must be based on the teachings of Hinduism, and the core teachings need to be developed and presented in a way that imparts wisdom and allows the community to rediscover the values within them. In the informative function, Hindu religious educators are expected to convey materials using simple and easily understandable language for the community they serve. This aims to ensure that the intended message is conveyed clearly and can be understood by as many people as possible. Paying attention to language that resonates with the community helps ensure that religious information can be accessed and digested by various segments of society. In the context of the educational function, the role of Hindu religious educators is to instill spiritual values in every material presented. Thus, educators focus not only on providing information but also actively shaping the character and morals of the community they serve. This education is not only related to understanding the teachings of dharma but also involves strengthening spiritual values derived from Hindu teachings. It is important to note that Hindu religious educators are expected to convey truths derived from Hindu teachings. In the educational function, the sustainability of guidance and guidance to the community must be based on truths and principles reflected in Hindu teachings. This ensures that the conveyed message is not only practically beneficial but also aligns with the values and religious norms highly regarded in the Hindu community. The educational function also includes the efforts of Hindu religious educators to encourage the development of Hindu religious values in the community they serve (Nuasa, 2017). Educators can act as facilitators in helping the community understand and implement the teachings of dharma in their daily lives. Through this approach, Hindu religious educators can play a constructive role in shaping the character and spirituality of the community they serve.

2. The consultative function of Hindu religious educators involves active engagement in providing solutions to every phenomenon that arises and develops in the community. This

function is realized in a two-way communication between Hindu religious educators and the community or individuals. In this context, consultation is not limited to interactions with individuals but can also involve dialogues with other community groups to gain a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. This consultation involves careful listening to detailed explanations of the problems faced, allowing Hindu religious educators to provide wise advice and insights. Although consultations may involve members of other community groups, the goal remains to provide the best information and solutions to the issues at hand. Such consultations are key in making decisions that have a significant impact on the religious life of the community. Religious issues tend to arise because communities have diverse social layers, educational levels, and economic statuses. Therefore, performing the consultative function allows Hindu religious educators to help identify issues accurately according to the expectations of the community they serve. Through the consultative function, it is expected that Hindu religious educators can be good listeners, aspirational, and convey constructive opinions for the development of their individual capabilities. The consultative function of Hindu religious educators also includes efforts to encourage a collaborative approach during the consultation process. Hindu religious educators can involve various parties, including members of other community groups, to obtain more comprehensive information and diverse solutions. Through this collaboration, it is hoped that a more holistic understanding of the religious issues at hand can be found. The consultation process conducted by Hindu religious educators aims to make crucial decisions in the context of the religious life order. By involving relevant parties, Hindu religious educators can ensure that the decisions made reflect a deep understanding of the issues faced by the community. These decisions, which may affect religious norms and values, need to be made with careful consideration and based on the truths of Hindu teachings. The consultative function also involves Hindu religious educators in adapting to the diversity of the community. By understanding that communities consist of various social strata, educational levels, and economic statuses, Hindu religious educators can identify religious issues that may arise from various segments of society. This allows Hindu religious educators to provide relevant solutions that align with the context of the community they serve. Through the consultative function, Hindu religious educators can gain valuable learning experiences. They are expected to be good listeners, aspirational, and convey

constructive opinions. By engaging in consultations, Hindu religious educators can continue to develop their interpersonal and leadership skills to contribute more effectively to the development of their communities. Thus, the consultative function of Hindu religious educators is an integral element in guiding communities to address religious issues with an informed and collaborative approach (Ramly, 2023).

3. The advocative function of Hindu religious educators involves guiding the community to protect their right to life. In this advocative role, educators act as intermediaries to help the community obtain legal protection, especially in cases related to religious issues. To anticipate such situations, Hindu religious educators are required to convey the moral teachings found in Hinduism. The concept of morality, one of which is embodied in the principle of Tri Kaya Parisudha, has eternal relevance. This principle encourages individuals to think right, speak right, and act right. By applying the teachings of Tri Kaya Parisudha in daily life, one can become a Hindu individual who avoids inappropriate behavior and prevents issues that can become obstacles in life. In handling religious issues, Hindu religious educators need to maintain good communication with all parties, including the community they serve. The advocative function is not only limited to moral guidance and the defense of the right to life but also involves the responsibility to defend the community from various threats, obstacles, disruptions, and challenges that can be detrimental. In their advocative function, Hindu religious educators must actively build effective communication with all parties, especially with the community they serve. Good communication is the key to a deep understanding of potential religious issues. Through open dialogue and interaction, educators can build trust and cooperation with the community, enabling advocacy efforts to be more effective. The advocative function also includes defending morality and religious life. Hindu religious educators play a role in providing moral and ethical guidance in line with Hindu teachings. By conveying moral principles, educators help the community live in accordance with religious values, preventing behavior that can lead to conflict and religious issues. Furthermore, the advocative function carries the responsibility of defending the community from various threats, obstacles, disruptions, and challenges that can be harmful. Hindu religious educators must consistently maintain good communication with the community to understand the issues that Hindu individuals may face (Idris, 2022). Thus, educators can provide appropriate guidance

and support to protect Hindu individuals from potential threats or disruptions to their freedom of religion and right to life. Through the responsible implementation of the advocative function, Hindu religious educators can be effective advocates in protecting the rights and freedoms of the Hindu community, ensuring the continuity of religious values in their community.

Communication Strategy for Hindu Religious Instructors

The digital-based communication strategy enables religious educators to deliver religious information in a more interactive and easily understandable manner for the community. Through multimedia content, such as videos, images, and informative texts conveyed via digital platforms, religious educators can provide a deeper understanding of religious teachings and values. Using various content formats, such as online lectures, interactive articles, or studies through social media, religious educators can present materials with an approach that suits the preferences and learning styles of the community. Some aspects that need to be considered by religious educators in providing guidance to the community are as follows (Sunarsi, 2019).

Enhancing Engagement: Digital platforms provide a broader space for two-way interaction between religious educators and the community. Through features like comments, discussion forums, or online Q&A sessions, the community can actively participate in religious dialogues. This strategy creates a more personal engagement and builds a digitally connected community. Religious educators can respond to questions, provide clarifications, or expand on discussions, all of which can enhance community engagement and ownership of the conveyed religious values.

Boosting Compliance: Digital communication strategies can strengthen the community's compliance with religious values. By presenting information consistently and accessibly, religious educators can shape positive perceptions and reinforce the community's commitment to religious practices. In this context, the use of reminders, periodic content, and the use of digital platforms as a means to monitor religious progress can be effective strategies to enhance community compliance.

Overcoming Space and Time Constraints: Digital-based communication strategies by religious educators have the advantage of overcoming limitations of space and time. The community can

access religious content anytime and anywhere through their digital devices. This allows religious educators to stay connected with the community without being constrained by geographical factors or tight schedules. Thus, this flexibility opens up accessibility to religious information for various segments of the community.

Promoting Innovation in Material Presentation: Digital media provides religious educators with the freedom to create innovative and engaging material presentations. The use of multimedia, animations, and interactive technology can make the delivery of religious information more interesting and relevant to a digitally living audience. This not only enhances the appeal of the content but also ensures that religious messages are easily understood and absorbed by the audience.

Providing Accessibility to Diversified Content: With various digital platforms available, religious educators can provide content that suits the needs and preferences of the community. Religious material can be presented in various formats, such as podcasts, videos, articles, or live streaming sessions. Diversifying content allows the community to choose the method that best fits their learning style, effectively enhancing understanding and engagement.

Measuring Impact Through Data and Analysis: Digital-based communication strategies allow religious educators to measure the impact of their communication efforts through data and analysis. Analytics platforms can provide insights into how well religious content is absorbed by the community, the level of interaction, and even information about trends or topics of interest. With a deeper understanding of community responses, religious educators can adjust their communication strategies to be more effective.

Facing Challenges and Being Responsive to Changes: By adopting digital-based communication strategies, religious educators can more easily face challenges and respond to changes in the community. In a rapidly changing era, technology enables religious educators to be more responsive to trends, needs, and dynamic changes in social structures. This flexibility allows religious educators to modify and adjust their communication strategies in response to developments in the community.

Enhancing Religious Community Connectivity: Digital communication strategies also play a role in enhancing connectivity within religious communities. Through discussion forums, online groups, or presence on social media, the community can connect more intensively. This forms a strong religious community that supports each other, increasing a sense of solidarity and togetherness in understanding and practicing religious values.

Providing Space for Creativity and Collaboration: Media digital provides space for religious educators to explore creativity and collaborate with various parties. For example, religious educators can invite guest speakers or hold collaborative activities through digital platforms. This not only enriches religious content but also expands the community's insights through diverse perspectives.

Facilitating Direct Feedback: Digital communication allows religious educators to receive feedback directly from the community. Comments, messages, or direct responses from the audience can be valuable sources of information to improve and refine communication strategies. The existence of feedback mechanisms also creates more active engagement and provides a sense of participation to the community.

With all these advantages, digital-based communication strategies for religious educators bring significant positive impacts in strengthening community engagement and understanding of religious values. Moreover, the adaptability and responsiveness enabled by technology make this strategy relevant and effective in facing the challenges and dynamics of modern society.

Factors in Communication Strategy for Religious InstructorsLiterasi Digital

The success of implementing a digital-based communication strategy is highly influenced by the level of digital literacy of religious educators. The ability to use digital technology, understand social media platforms, and manage content effectively is key to achieving digital communication goals.

1. Access and Technology Infrastructure The level of access and technology infrastructure in the area where religious educators work can impact the success of implementation. If internet

access is limited or the technological infrastructure is inadequate, it can be a barrier to effectively conveying messages to the community.

2. Institutional Support Support from the institution or organization where religious educators work also plays a crucial role. Support in the form of training, resources, and strategic guidance from the institution can enhance the ability of educators to implement digital communication strategies.

3. Community Engagement The level of community engagement with digital media can influence the success of implementation. If the community is actively using social media and digital technology, digital communication strategies have a greater potential to achieve desired goals.

4. Creativity in Content The creativity of religious educators in creating engaging and relevant content can influence the attractiveness and effectiveness of digital communication strategies. Creative, informative, and relevant content tailored to the needs of the community can enhance engagement and understanding.

5. Alignment with Local Culture The successful implementation of digital communication strategies also depends on how well the content and approach align with local culture. Religious educators need to understand local values and norms so that the messages conveyed are accepted and embraced by the community.

6. Resource Availability: The availability of resources, including time, manpower, and budget, can impact the success of implementation. If religious educators face resource limitations, it can be a hindrance to designing and executing digital communication strategies effectively.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation The success of digital communication strategies also depends on the ability of religious educators to monitor and evaluate the achieved outcomes. The ability to measure performance and respond to changes can enhance the overall effectiveness of communication strategies.

8. Responsiveness to Change The success of implementation is also related to the adaptability of religious educators to change. In a dynamic digital environment, the ability to quickly adjust communication strategies can determine long-term success.

By considering these factors, religious educators can be more effective in designing and implementing relevant digital communication strategies that meet the needs of their communities.

CONCLUSION

Basically, Hindu Religious Instructors have three functions: consultative and advocative functions, informative function, and educative function. These are expected to contribute positively to the spiritual, moral, and social development of the Hindu community and strengthen religious values in daily life. Therefore, it is crucial for Hindu religious instructors to understand digital communication strategies. This not only requires an understanding of technology but also active community involvement, creativity in educational content, institutional support, cultural adaptation, continuous evaluation, and responsiveness to change. Thus, this provides a holistic perspective on key factors that can influence success in conducting religious communication through digital media.

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