

# Character Education Strategy in the Era of Media Convergence: Case in the Institut Teknologi Bandung

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**Abstract**— Nowadays, social media has not only become a lifestyle but has transformed into a necessity of life. Social media provides easy access to information for the public, but, on the other hand, it encourages the emergence of social, cultural, and legal issues in society. The emergence of the term cyber conflict is the impact of irresponsible uses of social media. This study is an effort to implement character education strategies that are in line with the challenges and needs of the times, leading to the formation of values, attitudes, and mentalities of social media users. This study aims to formulate a hypothetical model of character education in the era of media convergence. The study was conducted qualitatively through the case study method. Data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. The results showed that: (1) the high potential for conflict in the digital era is in line with the community's high needs for information; (2) character education strategies in the era of media convergence are developed to build the moral competence of internet users, including moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral actions through the development of citizenship knowledge, citizenship skills, and citizenship character; (3) civic and religious education courses have a strategic position to transfer digital civilization values, both through curricular and co-curricular programs.

**Keywords:** *character education, moral competence, digital civilization*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization, which is currently followed by the acceleration of industrial technology 4.0, as well as the social development of the society entering the era of society 5.0 requires the community to possess various skills related to it. The world partition seems lost because the Internet of Things (IoT) has transformed the work system into a digital one, providing speed in transactions and interactions. This implies that current technology and information advancements have inevitably influenced many aspects of human life. Interactions between individuals are now transformed into digital interactions, preferably through sophisticated devices with existing social media intermediaries.

Social media, for instance, is now not only a lifestyle but also a necessity of life. It provides easy access to information for the public hence access to all kinds of information. Something can become viral because of the ease of access to create and disseminate this content through social media. Events that occur at the same time can be widely known by the public through social media. This phenomenon is a sign that the existence of social media technology has eliminated the world from borders. Information can be searched, obtained, and even uploaded momentarily through devices.

On the other hand, the phenomenon is encouraging the emergence of social, cultural, and legal issues in society. Continuing the development of this technology, legal and

social issues using the Internet and social media has become a part of the 21st-century problems, which then led to a new type of cyberconflict [1-3]. Knowledge and community literacy skills, particularly literacy in information technology, is still not fully understood by most people. The emergence of the term cyber conflict is the impact of irresponsible uses of social media. Furthermore, conflict or friction among the cyber community in the world is due to the abundance of information such as hoaxes or false information received by the public, often provoked by news on the media.

This condition clearly shows that the literacy knowledge of people in Indonesia in using social media is still low. The sophistication and speed of information are not followed by maturity and good mental and attitude. This has indirectly become an indicator that the public is not ready to wisely accept the progress and transformation of the media. One effort that can be done is to implement character education strategies that are in line with the challenges and needs of the times, leading to the formation of values, attitudes, and mentalities of social media users.

This article is a research presentation from the P3MI KK Ilmu Kemanusiaan ITB on character education strategies in the era of media convergence. ITB, as a center for the study of science, technology, art, and humanities, emphasizes that the technological advancements that occur at this time must be supported by the attitudes and mentality of each individual. The era of media convergence requires the maturity of the behavior of social media users. Therefore, character education is one way to grow the maturity and mentality of each individual to be wiser in responding to a variety of information obtained from the internet and social media.

## II. METHOD

This research aims to formulate a hypothetical model of character education in the era of media convergence. The study was conducted qualitatively using the case study method, with the focus of research directed at the academic community at ITB. Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The era of media convergence is a period where there is a merging or integration of existing media to be used and directed into a digital-based network through internet access. Media convergence is not only related to technological shifts or technological processes but also includes shifts in industrial, cultural, and social paradigms that encourage consumers to search for new information. Media convergence occurs as a result of how individuals interact with others at the social level and using various media platforms to create new experiences, new forms of media and content that connect us socially, and not only to other consumers but also to media producing companies.

Henry Jenkins defines media convergence as a flow of content across several media platforms, industrial cooperation with the media, and media migration activities [4]. This phenomenon occurs due to the emergence of digital technology

and new media. Information will flow faster and more flexible with media convergence. With the convergence of technology, one gadget can do many things such as phone calls, sending emails, watching videos, reading books, and more. This convergence also affects the economy of the community itself.

In a wider context, the convergence of the media indicates the increasingly rapid development of technology. Convergence changes the relationship between technology, industry, market, lifestyle, and audiences. Convergence causes radical changes in the handling, supply, distribution, and processing of all forms of information, both visual, audio, data, and so on [5]. In short, convergence changes the patterns of relations of production and consumption whose use has a serious impact on various fields such as economics, politics, education, and culture.

Media convergence is proof of the dynamics of the world that are always undergoing changes and produce a modern society. In the orientation of the development of civilization, humans lead to the process of digitalization or, in other words, the process towards ease, completeness, and speed in getting and understanding various information.

The presence of media convergence such as digital television, online television, mobile phones, and the internet is a factor causing changes in patterns of community interactions. Particularly in terms of socialization, media convergence is influential and can facilitate interactions between individuals and groups, as well as between groups. The availability of such media has allowed people to interact with each other even though separated by distance; with the help of the media, the interaction can be carried out easily.

Merging several technologies into one produces a positive impact that can introduce a culture to another culture. People have come to know cultures from several regions and from all over the world. The growing convergence of media has made people more familiar with cultures from around the world without their having to visit the sites. In addition, the public can also introduce their own culture through social media, the internet, applications, and others. With the existence of many cultures, it is deemed impossible that the community will not be affected by other cultures. Western culture, for instance, is widely followed by adolescents today, both in the style of dress, style of speech, lifestyle, and others. If the influence of external culture tends to be greater than the culture itself, the development of the era will grow, but the culture itself will fade by itself. Even other cultures can become our own culture. This condition has a negative impact on the Indonesian people who are currently beginning to feel and experience it.

In the context of socio-cultural relations, social interactions are becoming rare because of media convergence. People now rarely talk or meet face to face, and they rely more on the use of cell phones, which is easier to do. Interactive features make media users more comfortable telling and spreading stories, expressions, or information through the media. This media convergence has changed social relations.

Gradually, this phenomenon has brought people into a culture that tends to depend on technology. Anti-social attitude

can occur if the media convergence is used excessively and even tends to become dependency and addiction. Furthermore, the use of digital media without a good understanding of literacy will lead to the potential for conflict and misunderstanding among the community, which may later turn into disintegration.

Based on the explanation above, the important thing that must be prioritized and addressed is to increase literacy understanding and mental competence of the people, so that they have digital civilization. From the research that has been done, there are three aspects to be considered are:

*A. The high potential for conflict in the digital age is in line with the high public needs for information.*

The digital age provides maximum facilities to meet information needs. Although at first, the information on social media was just a lifestyle or leisure reading, it has eventually become an unwitting need. That is, the need for digital information through social media has been automatically programmed in our brains as users. The higher the community's need for information, the higher the potential for conflict due to social media is.

The forms of conflict that occur can be very diverse and involve individuals in various elements, as shown in the following chart:



Fig. 1. Map of potential conflicts that occur in individuals

Based on the chart above, each individual will experience conflict when receiving or delivering information. Intrapersonal conflict refers to ethical issues, good and bad values of the person in responding to the information he or she receives or makes. Interpersonal conflict is a conflict that occurs between individuals who have the same (homogeneous) atmosphere in addressing information. Social conflict is a broad scope that occurs between individuals in a heterogeneous environment.

All three conflicts occur directly in the form of social interactions in the real world. That is, each individual meets with each other and interact directly in response to various information received, whereas cyber conflict is friction, debate, and discussion that occurs in the digital space. The conditions that occur in the digital space are very different from the conditions in the real world. Individuals involved in the delivery of information, discussion, and debate do not have an emotional attachment. Something that happens in digital space is not necessarily the same as what happens in the real world.

Impacts of concern are the condition that has occurred in the digital space and then realized in the world or real life so as to give rise to misunderstandings. This is an indicator of high demand for information; the potential for conflict would be even higher.

*B. The strategy of character education in the era of media convergence*

Character education is one solution that can be done to reduce the high potential for conflict, misunderstanding, and irresponsible behavior of internet users in the era of media convergence. In general, character education promotes efforts to foster the most basic ethical values as a foundation for the birth of a good character among internet users. Character education must also be formulated comprehensively, not only in terms of thinking and learning material but also in the formulation of actions and practices that can be implemented by students. Therefore, effective character education requires a proactive, comprehensive, and intensive approach [6].

Character education is developed to build moral competence of the internet users, which include: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action through the development of civic knowledge, civic skill, and civic disposition [7,8]. Based on these three components, it can be stated that good character is supported by the knowledge of the good, the desire to do good, and do good deeds.



Fig. 2. The relationship between individual characters and the three aspects of character education

in socializing in the public or digital space. The moral feeling is a process of internalization of knowledge about concepts, ethics, and moral values. Moral action is a form of implementation of the process of internalizing moral values. These three processes can be carried out through the development of citizenship knowledge, citizenship skills, and citizenship character, so that good moral competency and individual mentality and understanding are realized in responding to the acceleration of information technology.

*C. Civic Education and Religious Education Courses as Transformers of Character Education and Civilization Values*

At the college level, especially at the Bandung Institute of Technology, character education is an important aspect that should be given to the students, including through the subjects of Civics and Religious Education. Both of these courses have

a strategic position to transform the values of digital civilization, both through curricular and co-curricular programs. This can be understood because, in the course, there are important aspects of character education that are at the core in realizing human beings who are moral and civilized. There are three aspects of character education that can be transformed through both courses, namely:

*1) The Morality Aspect*

According to John Dewey, moral education is the main aspect of every school's mission. Dewey's view is motivated by an increasingly complex social reality [9]. This indicates that the first and foremost taught in education is moral education. Therefore, in character education, there are main aspects that serve as the major elements of the existence of character education, namely moral education or morality itself. Morals can be classified in three ways:

*a) Moral as the teaching of morality, which means everything related to the demands for doing good and leaving the bad deeds that contradict the conditions prevailing in a society.*

*b) Moral, as a rule, meaning the provisions used by the community to assess whether someone's actions are good or bad.*

*c) Moral as a psychiatric symptom that arises in the form of actions, such as brave, honest, patient, passion, etc*

*2) Religiosity aspect*

Character building is the main key in the character education process. Therefore, in the process of the development of character education, it is deemed essential and needs to be adequately addressed by the school and specific learning materials. On the other hand, the learning material that is currently included in the character education curriculum is also part of the "teachings" and values that are promoted in religion. One aspect that cannot be separated from the content of concepts, curriculum, and character education learning is the religious or religiosity aspect, both in the form of teachings, moral principles, and values. In fact, religion can be an endless source to develop formulations, concepts, ideas, and teaching materials in character education.

The position of religion in character education, in addition to being a foundation, is also a contributor to the formulation of benchmarks for the intended good character constraints. Excluding religion as one aspect in formulating character education will make character education deprived of the dynamic nuances in it. Religious aspects in the concept and formulation of character education can be an inspirational source, episteme, and event space, or media for character education.

*3) Psychology aspect*

Another aspect that is no less important in character education is the psychological aspect as the character is inherent in the psychological dimensions of humans. Seeing and understanding and projecting a character without seeing the human psychological dimension will be impossible because the design of the building of human character exists and is

based on the human psychological dimension. This dimension in Lickona's view is a form of the emotional side of the character. Furthermore, Lickona explained the psychological aspects in the process of the formulation and development of character education, among others: (1) consciousness, (2) self-esteem or confidence, (3) empathy (caring for others), (4) love kindness, (5) self-control, and (6) humility. [10]

The psychological aspect is interpreted in character education both in the sense of the formulation of learning material and the formulation and learning practices carried out by educators, which is indispensable and cannot be neglected as the existing psychological principles. If psychological principles are ignored, the concepts and materials of character education will obscure the formulation of the character education itself. Meanwhile, in terms of the learning process, if the dimensions and psychological principles are ignored, it will hinder what is to be achieved from the learning process of character education itself.

Based on the three aspects of character education above, the subject of Religious Education and Citizenship Education is deemed essential. Furthermore, through these two courses, the aim of character education in the era of media convergence is to become more focused, namely to produce digital citizenship that has good quality, as illustrated in the following chart:



Fig. 3. The Nine Element of Digital Citizenship

**IV. CONCLUSION**

The era of media convergence is a period of integration of existing media to be used and directed into a digital-based network through internet access. Media convergence is not only related to technological shifts or technological processes, but also includes shifts in the industrial, cultural, and social paradigms. The use of increasingly free digital media without a good understanding of literacy raises the potential for conflict and misunderstanding among the community, which may potentially lead to disintegration. Therefore, the important thing that should be prioritized and addressed is increased understanding of literacy and mental competence of the community that has a digital civilization, taking into account three aspects: (1) increases in the potential for conflict in the digital age in line with the high public demand for information; (2) character education strategies in the era of media convergence are developed to build the moral competencies of

internet users which include; moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action through the development of citizenship knowledge, citizenship skills, and citizenship character; (3) Civics and Religious Education courses have a strategic position to transmit digital civilization values, both through curricular and co-curricular programs.

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