

Are Conventional Learning Media Still Effective in the 21st Century? : Case Study of Religious Education Teachers at Kononia Sentani Christian High School, Jayapura Regency

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Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of conventional learning media in the 21st century in teaching Christian Religious Education (PAK) at Kononia Sentani Christian High School, Jayapura Regency. This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to explore the implementation of conventional learning media in Christian Religious Education in the midst of rapid digital technology development. The subjects of the study consisted of two teachers of Christian Religious Education and twenty grade IX students who were actively involved in teaching and learning activities. Data was collected through observation techniques, structured interviews, and documentation. Observation assesses students' creativity, enthusiasm for participating in lessons, and active involvement in class. The structured interview delves into the use of conventional media in the context of 21st-century learning. Documentation includes analysis of the Learning Implementation Plan, student projects, and other supporting documents. The data was analyzed through transcription, interview reduction, and integration of observation results and documents, followed by verification to conclude. The findings of the study show that PAK teachers at Kononia High School use conventional media to support learning activities in the classroom and identify challenges in the application of modern learning media and recommend increasing pedagogical competence and technology integration to meet the demands of contemporary education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of industrial revolution 4.0, developments in information and communication technology have brought significant changes to the world of education. Digitalization has become a main pillar in various teaching methods, encouraging the integration of technology-based learning media in many institutions. Online learning, educational applications, and the use of social media to support the teaching and learning process have become increasingly widespread trends in the 21st century. However, in the midst of this rapid digitalization, fundamental questions arise regarding the relevance and effectiveness of conventional learning media, especially in Christian religious education. Even though information and communication technology has revolutionized the way we learn and teach, many educational institutions still rely on traditional methods in the learning process.

Educator readiness and the need for supporting policies are very important for the successful adoption of technology in religious education (Pariama, 2024). While digitalization offers innovative teaching methods, many educational schools still rely on conventional approaches.

Furthermore, the application of conventional learning media amidst technological advances can be said to be successful if it is supported by appropriate approaches and strategies to support the

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teaching and learning process. Not all teachers have access or the skills to utilize this technology optimally. Therefore, it is important to evaluate how conventional learning media can adapt to the needs of 21st century students who are more digitally connected.

Traditional media is valued for its structured content but lacks the interactivity of digital tools, with 70% of students preferring digital resources (Febriansyah et al., 2024). Conversely, reliance on technology can mask the basic skills provided by traditional methods, potentially leading to a disconnect in the learning experience. In the context of global education, there has been a major shift from traditional learning methods towards more interactive digital technology. *Platform digital* like *e-learning*, learning videos, and educational apps have been proven to increase student participation and understanding in many disciplines. In various schools and universities, the implementation of this educational technology provides easy access to information and allows students to learn with greater flexibility. On the other hand, conventional learning media are considered increasingly less relevant in responding to the needs of students (Kambu et al. 2024) who live in the digital era. However, in the field of Christian Religious Education (PAK), in emphasizing spiritual and moral values, conventional learning media often remains the choice that teachers rely on.

Many educators favor conventional methods because of their familiarity and perceived effectiveness in instilling moral values (Tarigan, 2024). However, the relevance of conventional media in the context of the 21st century cannot be separated from the big challenges faced by the world of education. Students born in the digital era are more easily distracted and tend to look for more visual and interactive learning methods.

In the context of education in eastern Indonesia, specifically in Papua, the application of digital media in learning still requires continuous adaptation. Thus, various basic questions arise regarding the use of conventional and digital media in learning activities. Simple questions such as, how to make conventional learning media remain relevant amidst the dominance of digital technology, or is there still room to maintain the use of conventional media. This, of course, is a fundamental problem in the portrait of education in the land of paradise.

Rural areas face operational obstacles, such as inadequate internet access, making the transition to digital learning difficult (Tenau, 2024). In line with that, Septiari & Suwandi, said that despite the emergence of digital tools such as *e-learning* and social media, conventional media still plays an important role in education, especially for basic literacy and involvement in communities with limited digital access (Septiari & Suwandi, 2024). While digital media offers innovative learning opportunities, the persistence of conventional methods remains essential for inclusive education in Papua, ensuring that all learners can benefit from diverse educational resources.

For this reason, teachers at the Kononia Sentani Christian High School, Jayapura Regency face similar challenges, especially Christian religious education teachers. As one of the educational institutions committed to teaching Christianity. This school still relies on conventional learning media in teaching learning activities, one of which is PAK subjects. Teachers at this school prefer media such as the Bible, posters and lectures to convey the values of the Christian faith to students. There are many factors that influence the use of conventional media, including schools not being able to adapt to digital learning, lack of digital literacy and others.

However, in the midst of the demands of the digital era, it is necessary to examine the effectiveness of this learning media, whether conventional media is still relevant and effective in achieving the goals of PAK education amidst continuously developing technological challenges.

This study aims to analyze whether conventional learning media are still effective in supporting Religious Education teaching in the 21st century. By using a case study approach at Kononia Sentani Christian High School, this research seeks to answer critical questions regarding the relevance of traditional learning methods in the digital era. It is hoped that the findings from this research will provide deeper insight into how PAK teachers at this school adapt to the challenges of modern education, as well as explore the potential for developing learning methods that are more contextual to the needs of today's students. Thus, the research results contribute to the development of more effective learning strategies, but also become an important reference for other Christian schools in designing curricula that suit the needs of the 21st century.

2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. This approach examines and analyzes comprehensively to gain a deep understanding of the learning process at Kononia Sentani Christian High School, Jayapura Regency. This method can provide an in-depth and comprehensive picture for researchers to collect existing data (Sugiarto et al., 2023). The subjects in this research were 2 Christian religious education (PAK) teachers and 20 class IX students who were actively involved in teaching and learning activities.

This approach uses observation techniques, structured interviews and documentation to produce data in the field. The interviews were directed at exploring and deepening the questions given (Tasijawa et al, 2024) to PAK teachers regarding the effectiveness of using conventional methods in PAK learning in the 21st century. Meanwhile, observation techniques looked at students' creativity in working on projects, and students' enthusiasm for participating in learning and enthusiastic students are actively involved directly in teaching and learning activities in class. Documentation is carried out by looking at lesson plans, student projects and learning support documents. Data analysis was carried out using recording transcripts followed by reduction of interview data according to the results of classroom observations and documents that support learning, as material for presenting the data after which it was analyzed and verified to draw final conclusions.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of conventional learning media at Kononia Sentani Christian High School.

The use of conventional media in learning by PAK teachers in the era of digitalization has its own uniqueness in shaping the theological understanding and Christian character of students in Kononia Sentani Christian High School. The relevance of conventional learning media in 21st century education is a challenge in maintaining the power of traditional media in teaching spiritual and moral values with digital technology.

Religious Education teachers who embrace creativity can design interesting learning experiences, encouraging active student participation and a deeper understanding of religious values (Erson Umbu Ndula Manang, 2024). Importantly, PAK teachers in Kononia Sentani Christian High School in integrating innovation in learning using conventional media remains an important priority by using methods and strategies that support the learning process amidst changing times.

This research found that PAK teachers at Kononia Sentani Christian High School still use conventional learning media in their learning practices in the classroom. Many things influence the application of digital media in learning, one of which is that stakeholders' digital literacy skills still need adaptation, supported by training for teaching staff. Thus, increasing the potential for transformative learning experiences through digital tools in application. However, most of them are still not utilized optimally. Necessarily, addressing these challenges through structured training programs can significantly improve the educational landscape for PAK teachers and their students.

The use of conventional media to support learning activities includes: 1) Textbooks and the Bible; 2) *Flashcards* (Picture card); 3) Posters and flannel boards; 4) Audio Media such as Cassettes or CDs; and 5) Manila, Asturo and Paper *Styrofoam*.

Thus, the preference of PAK teachers in using conventional learning media shows that there is a connection between the pedagogical approach applied and the contextual needs of students at Kononia Sentani Christian High School. In the context of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, PAK teachers must improve their pedagogical competence and utilize technology effectively to meet contemporary educational challenges (Karlau & Rukua, 2023). It is important to collaborate on methods, approaches and effectiveness of conventional learning media that must be carried out by PAK teachers at Kononia Sentani Christian High School in creating targeted learning so that they can achieve learning goals in the digital era which is increasingly developing rapidly in the world of education.

Based on the findings in this research, the use of conventional media by PAK teachers to support the learning process at Kononia Sentani Christian High School, will be discussed comprehensively as follows; *First*, the use of textbooks and the Bible is the main guidance for PAK teachers. Textbooks are a basic reference in compiling learning tools, thereby providing a systematic structure and organized information to support teachers' understanding of key concepts, so that PAK teachers can present material as well as exercises and activities to present to students in the hope that learning objectives can be achieved.

Meanwhile, the Bible is used as a primary source, by introducing students to the fundamental teachings of Christianity and developing text analysis skills and spiritual reflection. This integration encourages critical thinking and reflection, as students connect academic concepts to their spiritual lives, increasing overall understanding (Mahardika et al., 2023) Therefore, integrating textbooks and the Bible in learning provides a holistic and integrated approach, which includes knowledge, skills and values, thereby supporting deep understanding and being relevant to students' lives.

Second, *flashcards* (Image card) Media use *flashcards* in learning Christian Religious Education at Kononia Sentani High School, and have provided a learning experience with visual interaction for students in class. Contextually, students' low understanding or digital literacy is an additional problem that must be overcome by PAK teachers at Kononia Sentani High School. This makes PAK teachers try to stimulate students' enthusiasm in participating in the learning process. Therefore, implementing learning using conventional media really helps teachers and students in providing and understanding the material being studied.

Therefore, it cannot be denied that students' diverse backgrounds require teachers to continue to innovate by using conventional media in the teaching and learning process. *Flashcards* has been shown to facilitate better retention of information, as evidenced by improved scores in experimental classes across a variety of subjects, including English vocabulary (Mutar, 2024). This media also strengthens collaboration between students through group discussions, not only improving cognitive skills, but also forming relevant moral and spiritual character, thus reflecting an effective integration between simple media and a student-centered learning process based on Christian values.

Third, the implementation of poster and flannel board media in Christian Religious Education learning at Kononia Sentani High School directly provides visual and interactive interaction in ongoing learning activities. The use of this media can also convey information and messages directly to students. PAK teachers provide posters containing inspirational quotes from the Bible or pictures depicting important events in Christian history, as tools to help achieve learning objectives and attract students' attention.

The use of posters has been shown to significantly increase student interest and attention in subjects such as Islamic Education, with increases reaching up to 95% in engagement levels (Sulaeman et al., 2023). The benefits of this media help strengthen students' memory of the material being taught and make the class atmosphere more dynamic.

Meanwhile, learning activities use a board *flannel*, teachers directly engage students by arranging, moving, and linking images or symbols and fostering a more dynamic learning environment, thereby strengthening their understanding through hands-on practice. Board *flannel* has been developed to increase creativity in teaching, leading to better student responses and engagement in religious character education (Manang et al., 2024). Combining these two media encourages active and collaborative learning, which not only strengthens cognitive aspects, but also develops creativity and social skills which are important in Christian-based character education in Papua, specifically at Kononia Sentani High School.

Fourth, the use of audio media such as cassettes or CDs in Christian Religious Education learning at Kononia Sentani High School has integrated simple technology that is appropriate to local realities, this audio-based learning strengthens students' communication skills, media literacy and spiritual understanding in the context of Christianity in Papua. In addition, students are given assignments by PAK teachers to record the content of Sunday worship sermons and other services

after which they are discussed in class presentations. This certainly allows students to develop active listening skills, analysis and critical reflection on religious teachings.

Audio-based learning provides a dynamic way to explore Christian concepts, making spiritual teachings more relevant and accessible to students (Gainau & Pentury, 2023). While the use of audio media presents many benefits, facilitating students' theological understanding through deepening the sermon message, it also encourages students to be more involved in their religious activities. However, challenges such as the availability of resources and the need for teacher training in technology integration remain important to optimize its effectiveness in innovative learning processes.

Fifth, the use of Manila paper, Asturo and Styrofoam as media to support Christian religious education learning activities at Kononia Sentani High School, leading more towards learning contextual creativity projects at school and at home, including; students create concept map projects, knowledge trees (*tree of knowledge*) using manila, asturo and paper media *Styrofoam*, and other materials to be presented in class. The use of this media allows students to actively combine visual, motor and cognitive skills in understanding learning objectives. By utilizing easily accessible materials, students can develop creativity and critical thinking both at school and at home. Additionally, the process of presenting projects in class encourages communication and collaboration skills, which are important in character and spiritual education.

Integration of creative media, such as Manila and *Styrofoam*, encourages students to express their understanding of religious concepts visually, which is in line with findings that innovative teaching methods significantly improve student engagement and learning outcomes (Erson Umbu Ndula Manang, 2024). The massive use of digital media, such as YouTube, Power Point, Canva, Quizizz, Kahoot and others, is not yet optimal, in designing interactive and innovative learning in the learning process due to limited supporting facilities such as digital media in the learning process, which also adds to the problem of teacher creativity in providing interactive learning for students.

Factors influencing the application of modern learning media by PAK teachers at Kononia Sentani Christian High School

In this study, there are several main factors that influence the application of Modern Learning media by PAK Teachers at Kononia Sentani Christian High School. *First*, teachers are less adaptive in mastering science and technology and implementing the independent curriculum. *Second*, low participation in training, *third*, teachers are still focused on administrative demands at school and busy lives at home. *Fourth*, learning tools are not yet innovative and interactive. *Fifth*, students' mastery of science and technology is still low.

The results of the research reveal that local educational institutions pay little attention to developing the competency of Christian Religious Education teachers, especially through activities such as workshops, workshops and seminars to meet job demands. Apart from that, the role of schools in improving the competency of PAK teachers in state schools in Sentani District is also not optimal (Bu'tu & Tasijawa, 2022). These problems stem from inadequate professional development, lack of resources, and inadequate support from educational institutions. Therefore, improving teacher performance requires a holistic approach that includes not only professional development but also a supportive workplace culture and adequate resources. In summary, this study identified important factors such as inadequate technological competency, limited professional development, administrative burden, non-innovative teaching resources, and low student engagement with technology, all of which significantly influence teachers' adoption of modern learning media PAK in the context of education.

Efforts to increase the use of learning media by PAK teachers at Kononia Sentani Christian High School

The efforts that have been made by the school to increase the use of conventional and modern learning media include: *First*: Teacher involvement in participating in the Subject Teacher Deliberation Program (MGMP) at the provincial level. *Second*, program *In House Training* (IHT)

to increase teacher competence in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. *Third*, follow the Teaching Freedom Platform (PMM) to be able to support every teacher's activity at school. *Fifth*, participation in training activities in the form of workshops, seminars and webinars. *Sixth*, The Principal carries out an assessment of the learning tools which is carried out in three stages, the first at the beginning of the semester by checking and assessing the feasibility of the RPP created by the teacher, in the middle of the semester it is carried out in classroom learning activities and at the end of the semester in the form of a joint evaluation. *Seventh*, strengthening and deepening digital literacy for all stakeholders at Kononia Sentani High School.

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research shows that the use of conventional learning media by PAK teachers at Kononia Sentani Christian High School is still the main choice in learning activities. Media such as textbooks, the Bible, *flashcards*, posters, boards, flannel, audio media, as well as creative materials such as Manila paper and *Styrofoam* proven to support students' understanding of theological values and Christian character. Even though this method is applied in the context of religious learning, limitations in mastering technology by teachers and students are a challenge in facing the demands of the digital era.

Furthermore, this research identified several factors that influence the low implementation of modern learning media, such as limited mastery of science and technology, lack of professional training, administrative burden, and lack of innovative teaching resources. Therefore, efforts to increase teacher competency through training programs, *workshops*, and evaluation of learning tools is needed to optimize integration between conventional media and technology in the learning process.

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