**Research Article**

# Strengthening Religious Literacy as an Effort to Overcome the Moral Degradation of Generation Z in the Digital Era

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**Abstract.**
Generation Z is a group of individuals who grew up in the digital era. Even though digital technology has provided great benefits, there are concerns about moral degradation in this generation. This article discusses efforts to strengthen religious literacy as a step to overcome moral degradation among Generation Z in the digital era. This research method uses a qualitative descriptive approach, with a library method. The results of this research illustrate how the digital era plays an important role today. The tendency of Generation Z, digital natives, to have easy access to various digital content, both positive and negative, has influenced their understanding of moral values. This generation's exposure to information that is not always in accordance with religious values can cause negative behavioral changes. To overcome this problem, strengthening religious literacy is important in reducing the occurrence of moral degradation in Generation Z. This article also highlights the important role of schools, families, and religious leaders in supporting the strengthening of religious literacy through religious moderation, character education, and the use of digital literacy. With this effort, it is hoped that Generation Z can strengthen their understanding of religious values, strengthen their morals, and become more responsible individuals in facing the challenges of the digital era. Strengthening religious literacy is the basis for forming a generation with moral integrity amidst rapid technological change.

**Keywords:** moral degradation, Generation Z, strengthening religious literacy

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## 1. Introduction

The world's population continues to grow, creating several generations. Starting from the Baby Boomers Generation (1946-1960) to the generation that has a vital role in technology, namely Generation Z or Gen Z (1995-2010). Singh & Dangmei's[1] article states that Gen Z is the first generation to be exposed to technology. These technologies are in the form of computers or other electronic media such as cell phones, internet networks, and even social media applications. This generation was raised by digitalization and

technology which has become their identity. This is what makes Gen Z different from previous generations, namely the ease of accessing information through digitalization.

Gen Z's easy internet access in the digital era has resulted in a generation that is dependent on the internet [2] Gen Z's easy internet access in the digital era has resulted in a generation that is dependent on the internet [3] This means that this year there has been an increase of 1.17 percent. Not without reason, the internet in the current era has emerged as a vital tool used throughout the world for various purposes. This has made it easier for users to get information and access information as needed [4] This generation has the opportunity to take advantage of the various benefits offered by advances in the digital era [5]. They have a strong desire for quick and easy access to knowledge, enjoy spending quality time alone, and appreciate life without limitations.

The digital era is a period in history in which digital technology, especially computers and the internet, has had a profound and widespread influence on various aspects of human life. This creates significant changes in the way we work, communicate, learn, interact and live our daily lives. This digital era has the main characteristics of the dominance of digital technology in the dissemination of information and communication. As time goes by, today's very rapid technological advances have drastically changed the moral landscape of generation Z [6].

The existence of the internet due to developments in technology, information and communication has become both a challenge and an opportunity. The good side of life is being touched by knowledge from all over the world without any boundaries of time and space. The existence of the internet in research Sari in 2019 states that the teenage generation, namely generation Z, has a strong desire to access information quickly and easily. Even though the millennial generation outwardly looks modern and technologically savvy, they have potential vulnerabilities and detrimental aspects [7].

One of the bad side shifts in developments in the current digital era is the moral degradation that targets generation Z [8]. This moral degradation occurs as a result of the problem of a generation lacking literacy and self-control [9], such as those related to politeness norms, religious norms, and hospitality norms are increasingly being eroded. By showing unethical behavior, namely having sexual relations, drug abuse, murder and dishonesty in the workplace. They are also vulnerable to an existence influenced by distorted understandings and extremist ideologies, including terrorism, fundamentalism, radicalism, intolerance, and extreme thinking that have a negative impact on their lives [10].

According to Thimas Lickona, there are several forms of moral degradation of teenagers, including crime or criminality. According to a 2020 World Health Organization (WHO) report, around 200,000 murders are committed by individuals aged 12-29 years every year [11]. Apart from that, a trend of dishonesty has become increasingly ingrained among the younger generation. Including increasing sentiments of distrust and hostility towards each other, disrespect for parents, educators and community leaders, as well as the development of deviant behavior in generation Z [12].

Some examples of the effects of globalization are, the younger generation tends to adopt cultural values from outside, an increasing tendency to be pragmatic and hedonistic, a lack of compliance with existing social norms, and a decrease in adherence to religious teachings. Research by Rolando and Setiawati, states that moral degradation causes the erosion of Aqidah and Akhlaq, a shift in single religious authority, the problems of a prulal, hedonistic, individualistic society and a materialistic society related to rationalistic Muslims targeting the teenage generation which is a threat point for the sustainability of generation Z, especially in Indonesia [13].

The impact of behavior that deviates from accepted social norms has resulted in juvenile delinquency becoming a serious social problem [14] There are several factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency, including a lack of self-control which may be caused by a lack of deep understanding of religion, as well as influences from family, peers and the general public [15]. Due to the influence of the digital era, there has been a deviation in the boundaries of politeness and morality, such as in the past it was considered taboo and now it has become habitual, from what was once thought to be impossible to something that is happening [16]. Moral degradation is currently very vulnerable to occurring in Generation Z. What is feared is that when this is considered normal and used as an example by other people, morals that deviate from the norms that have been in force will increasingly spread.

The moral degradation of generation Z is one of the social problems which can be interpreted as the moral quality of teenagers currently experiencing a decline and being uncontrollable so it needs special attention [17]. Considering that most of generation Z are undergoing critical stages of educational growth and development, moral awareness is an indispensable strategy for their overall well-being. This research aims to find ways to increase and strengthen religious literacy in overcoming moral degradation among generation Z. Bearing in mind, perhaps some of generation Z may not fully understand and apply religious teachings well.

## 2. Methods

Research on strengthening religious literacy as an effort to overcome the moral degradation of generation Z in this era of digitalization uses literature or book study methods. The special characteristic of this research method is that it is directly confronted with the data or text that has been presented. Researchers only deal directly with sources from various sources, both primary and secondary in the form of previous journals, reference books and various other social media sources. Data analysis in this research was carried out using the interactive model from Miles & Huberman where there are three interrelated sub-processes, namely: First, data reduction, namely the process of selecting, focusing by summarizing, selecting the main things, focusing on important things and presenting the story with written. Second, a more focused data presentation includes structured summaries. Third, the conclusion and verification stage in the interpretation process; determining the meaning of the data presented [17].

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Development and Characteristics of Generation Z

Populations around the world continue to grow, producing many different generations. Starting from the Baby Boomers Generation (born 1946-1960) to Generation Z or Gen Z (born 1995-2010), each generation has its own influences and characteristics. An article by Singh & Dangmei highlights that Gen Z is the first generation to grow up with technology as an integral part of their lives. They are exposed to various technological devices such as computers, smartphones, the internet, and even social media from an early age. Therefore, technology has become their identity that differentiates them from previous generations.

Gen Z grew up in a digital era that has changed the way they access and interact with information. They have easy access to information through digitalization, which is ingrained in their mindset and behavior. One of the main impacts of this digital era is Gen Z's dependence on the internet. Data from the APJII survey of Internet Users in Indonesia notes that internet penetration will reach 78.19 percent in 2023, which means more than 215 million Indonesians have internet access. This shows an increase of 1.17 percent from the previous year.

The internet in this digital era has become a very important tool used by Gen Z all over the world for various purposes. This makes it easy for them to get information

and access resources according to their needs. This generation is very familiar with the various benefits offered by advances in the digital era. They have a strong desire to gain knowledge quickly and easily, enjoy quality time alone, and value freedom in their lifestyle without restrictions.

Generation Z has unique characteristics shaped by their experiences and social environment. The main characteristics of generation Z are Digital Natives. Generation Z tends to be digital natives, not without reason, but they grew up with technology such as computers, smartphones and the internet as a natural part of their lives. Therefore they have a high level of technological skills and tend to be highly connected digitally. Apart from that, multitasking in using various digital devices and social media platforms, thinking creatively and innovatively, being open to cultural diversity, having high social awareness, thinking pragmatically, having ownership tendencies, being aware of life balance and being dependent on social media. These characteristics may vary among other Generation Z, but in general, Generation Z is a generation that is used to technology, thinks creatively and cares about social issues.

They have characteristics that include social awareness, reliance on technology, ethical spending preferences, strong educational background, health awareness, financial prudence, and increased spiritual awareness [18]. This group of individuals born in the era of globalization has special advantages in mastering and adapting to technology compared to previous generations. They are constantly exposed to a rapid flow of information, giving members of this group easy access to knowledge and encouraging an open mindset towards learning [19].

However, the abundance of information also brings challenges, as millennials need to develop strong critical thinking skills to sort out what is accurate and trustworthy. The internet and social media give them unparalleled access to information, which contributes to a creative and knowledge-enriching environment. However, they must also be careful because these technological tools have the potential to damage moral values and cause moral and spiritual degradation.[20] Striking a balance between responsible use of technology and awareness of its potential negative impacts is crucial for the millennial generation in developing themselves in the digital era.

We realize that the digital era has an influence on life, both positive and negative. There are many positive things shown in this digital era, including easy access to information so it is easy to get, making it easier to interact between people and other people even though they are in different times and places, making people more aware of technology, among these positive things there are negative impacts of technological advances in this era. This digital thing causes a decline in norms in society which ends

in the emergence of moral degradation among [21] the nation's children. Increasingly sophisticated and advanced technology has an impact on life which causes a shift in the values, norms, rules and morals of life in the teenage generation, in this case generation Z.

This concern is important for a strategy to strengthen a moral personality based on religion. Bearing in mind that Generation Z is the generation most vulnerable to the negative influences of digital progress [22]. This is where the important role of Islamic religious education through integral and functional religious literacy is in overcoming moral degradation. Generation Z is seen as adolescence. Psychologists say that this generation is the generation that is determining their life journey. According to Sigmund Freud's view, adolescence is a time when a person is looking for an erotic life that has a definite form. In the article, Achmad Juntika states that Hoffman also has views about adolescence. According to him, adolescence is a period of forming an attitude towards something that is experienced personally. Conger and Erikson said that adolescence is considered a period of crisis, which can make adolescence the best time, as well as the worst time. This depends on how generation Z responds to the various problems that occur [23].

## 3.2. Factors Causing Moral Degradation Among Gen Z

The moral crisis that is eroding our nation at this time definitely has general and specific causes that need to be studied so that it can be addressed appropriately. Moral degradation among Generation Z can be influenced by various complex factors. These factors may interact with each other and vary from individual to individual. The moral degradation that is currently occurring is caused by several quite crucial things as explained below.

*First,* the influence of advances in information and communication technology and the influence of social media. This flow of progress cannot be avoided by every human being, group of people, even a country. Like it or not, every human being has to adapt himself to this progress. There are always two different sides, where this technological progress, if humans can take advantage of opportunities, will be of great benefit and profit for themselves. On the other hand, if someone cannot control themselves and is instead lulled by the practicality and convenience offered by technology, it could be a loss for themselves. The reason is that if someone continues to rely on technology which is considered as a daily assistant because of the convenience of that technology, in the future it will be possible for someone to just be an ordinary human being. The

personality that is formed comes from the influence of technology itself. Having an instant mentality is one of the characters that now dominates Generation Z. The irony is that today's young generation is mostly lulled by technological advances. Indonesia's hopes and predictions for gold in 2045 seem to be dashed at a crossroads. In addition, Generation Z is exposed to high levels of social media, which can influence their thinking and behavior. Sometimes, social media can be a platform for unethical or immoral information and behavior [24].

*Second,* there is a lack of understanding regarding the values of moral education, religion and spirituality which are increasingly fading. The birth of world science which is considered so complete and rational regarding everything that happens on earth has caused humans to know all the information they need so that humans sometimes forget the vertical relationship with God Almighty. This decline in the values of moral and religious education causes people to do things without regulations, without guidelines and as if their actions will not be held accountable. When a person's religious values fade, the controlling power within him disappears. The only tool that acts as a barrier or parameter for someone to act is the norms that exist in society and all the sanctions that regulate them. However, usually, the norms that exist in society are not as strong as internal supervision. For example, teenagers nowadays find it difficult to control comments on social media, they easily become cyberbullying, judging posts they don't like without thinking about the consequences of their actions. The lack of internal control system triggers a person to commit unfavorable actions, including the moral decadence that occurs in the current generation [25].

*Third,* the lack of supervision within the family over their children at home and economic factors that cause social and economic inequality. Which creates injustice that encourages unethical or immoral behavior. The family is the child's closest environment, some people even call it the first and main madrasah for the child's development and growth. If someone grows up in a family that tends to deviate, then their children will behave deviantly. For example, teenagers in Karangmojo village are found to be having free sex because they grew up in a bad family where their mother had an affair to support her economy while her father liked to play with other women but her parents still lived under the same roof. This affects the development of the child's personality where the child engages in free sex because he sees his parents' behavior like that. In several other cases in Karangmojo village, a teenager was caught in a prostitution case, the background of which was none other than the inability to meet his daily needs [26].

*Fourth,* the increasingly rapid flow of culture gives rise to various problems, including consumerism, prulalism, secularism, hedonistic, individualistic and materialistic societies. Currently, we often hear and see in online media about middle school or high school teenagers or even students who carry illegal drugs or alcohol and even become syndicates for distributing drugs, cigarettes or vapes, pictures and contraceptives. These objects indicate or are related to moral deviation or moral decadence. This phenomenon occurs because of a lifestyle that is solely for personal satisfaction, lustful pleasures, and seeking material for a luxurious lifestyle. They also often upload their activities on social media, such as eating at a luxury restaurant, buying luxury goods and even their discotheque activities. The emergence of these attitudes and actions cannot be separated from the need and existence in the environment and on social media. They do whatever it takes to fulfill these needs. This lack of self-control in Generation Z is sometimes exploited by capital investors solely to gain material profits. The rapid flow of culture like this is the biggest contributing factor in destroying the morals of Generation Z and the nation's youth.

Based on the phenomenon of moral degradation that is currently affecting Generation Z, it is necessary for schools, teachers and parents to carry out reconciliation as an effort to overcome this problem. Bearing in mind, it is feared that this could lead to a global moral crisis, such as corruption, injustice and conflict, which could affect the moral outlook of Generation Z. Then awareness of Generation Z will fade, who may not be fully aware of the moral impact of their actions on themselves and others, leading to a crisis. identity where Generation z is experiencing a crisis in looking for moral direction in their lives. Thus, a comprehensive approach is needed to overcome moral degradation which must involve moral education, role models, social awareness, and support in building a strong understanding of moral values among Generation Z.

The combination of these factors creates a significant challenge in efforts to address and reduce the level of delinquency among generation Z. The many incidents of deviance and moral decline recorded in this era raise concerns about a lack of religious moderation, which is contrary to the goals of its teachings which aim to develop Indonesian society. which is peaceful, harmonious and tolerant [28]. Some of the millennial generation do not fully understand and implement religious teachings well. To overcome this problem, we need to embrace religious education as a way of life, as this helps to develop oneself and encourage moderation among the younger generation.

### 3.3. Religious Moderation as an Effort to Strengthen Generation Z's Religious Literacy

As social creatures, humans naturally tend to communicate and interact with other people to fulfill their needs and desires. In society, individuals often interact with various groups, including groups with diverse religious backgrounds. Regardless of race or religion, we must recognize that these social interactions can cause tension and conflict [29]. Along with human existence, clashes and friction often occur due to differences in beliefs, values and cultural practices.

To maintain the integrity and coherence of society and prevent conflict, mutual respect and respect are very important. Therefore, it is important to promote and maintain the concept of religious moderation. Strengthening religious literacy through religious moderation teaches the younger generation how to understand and practice their religion with a moderate, inclusive and tolerant attitude. The main aim of this approach is to promote a balanced understanding of religion and avoid extremism and religious conflict. Religious moderation requires a balance and tolerant approach in understanding and implementing religious teachings, avoiding extreme interpretations, whether in the form of rigid understandings or those that are too liberal. Indicators of religious moderation include tawasuth (moderate), tasamuh (tolerant), tawazun (balanced), and ups and downs (consistent, firm and fair) in one's beliefs. In Indonesia, it has strong roots in the teachings of the Koran and is a basic concept in religious education [30].

Educational efforts aimed at encouraging religious moderation play an important role in shaping the character of the millennial generation and promoting peace. Indonesia is a diverse country, characterized by racial, cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. By embracing these differences, this nation strives to live side by side in harmony, by emphasizing the values of tolerance in its society. The values of peaceful and harmonious living together are embodied in Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, which are the guiding principles [31]. The concept of religious moderation is in line with the national education system as regulated in Law Number 2 of 2003. This educational method is rooted in Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, which is based on Indonesian national religious and cultural values and is responsive to changing times.

Apart from aligning the concept of religious moderation with the national education system by integrating education about tolerance, inter-religious dialogue and respect for diversity in the education curriculum. Then, involve students in discussions about radicalism and extremism in the context of their religion. This helps them identify red

flags and avoid falling into extremes. This encourages students to participate in open discussions about religion and ethics. This allows them to reflect on the meaning of religion in their lives and understand the views of others. As well as, utilizing educational technology to provide resources that support religious moderation, including videos, online courses and applications that teach inclusive values. Strengthening religious literacy through religious moderation is an important step in promoting tolerance, peace and understanding among the younger generation. This also helps prevent radicalism and extremism that can damage society.

The phenomenon and dynamics of modern Islam have become the focus of attention of researchers, especially intellectuals who seek to understand the complexity of terrorism, fundamentalism, radicalism and intolerance in the context of religion [32]. This subject continues to spark interesting discussions in media coverage and academia. Discussions surrounding this phenomenon highlight its unique and complex nature, leading to the emergence of theories from a variety of backgrounds. In Indonesia, the existence of intolerance that still exists is proof that there is an urgent need to increase understanding and appreciation of Islamic values that support moderation. Therefore, various efforts are being made to address this issue, with a focus on Islamic moderation education programs. To ensure the effectiveness of these programs, attention to factors such as curriculum, recruitment of teaching staff, and appropriate learning strategies is necessary [33].

In diverse societies, inclusive and moderate Islamic education is considered the most effective tool for preventing fanaticism, deradicalization and conflict [34]. With a focus on moderation, Islamic educational institutions seek to shape the mindset of all Muslims, encouraging individuals to embrace religious diversity and respect the beliefs of others [35]. However, Indonesia faces big challenges because of its diversity which includes various ethnicities, races, groups, civilizations and religions. The influence of Western liberalism created a threat to Eastern culture and morals, resulting in the emergence of unrestricted systems and unstructured forms of Islam.

## 3.4. Character Education as an Effort to Form Generation Z's Morals

Strengthening Religious Literacy through Character Education in schools or universities is an effective approach to forming generation Z who have a strong understanding of religion and good moral behavior [36]. Understanding the current digital era is an important key to ensuring that we can build sustainable social and economic relations

by utilizing advanced technology and knowledge supported by technology. The digital era has significantly changed the way we live and work, creating a society based on knowledge. As time goes by, the impact of the digital era will be felt in all aspects of life, including in the education sector.

It cannot be denied that today's very rapid technological advances have drastically changed the educational landscape. Currently, many concerns arise regarding student behavior in the digital era, such as cyberbullying and copyright violations. Character education has now become the main focus in the world of education, both through formal and informal education. As we all know, character education has a very important role in creating a democratic society that adheres to various values, such as respecting others, maintaining justice and equality, and caring for the welfare of the surrounding community, as well as providing voluntary assistance. Character has long been considered something that has a special connotation [37]. In other words, when someone is considered to have good character, it also means that the person has several other qualities such as trustworthiness, integrity, passion, and dependability.

Strengthening religious literacy through Islamic character education can help Generation Z students build a strong understanding of religion and moral values, and encourage them to become responsible and ethical citizens in society. Character education focuses on developing a good name, which is an important aspect in forming morals, especially in forming children. To achieve this, educational and coaching facilities are needed that are well designed and implemented consistently. Continuous assessment and improvement in the educational process is expected to produce outstanding students. Increasing awareness of the importance of moral and aqidah education reflects efforts to improve the overall quality of education [38].

Character education as an effort to increase moral values can of course be done through moral and aqidah education. It is not without reason that Aqidah has an important role in children's education, involving various crucial aspects in their development. Individuals who are based on noble principles and guided by someone who has strong faith tend to have high competence [39]. Islamic Aqidah teachings emphasize the importance of avoiding behavior that is contrary to religious teachings, which in turn contributes to the formation of noble morals, which are based on guidelines from the Koran and hadith [40]. Aqidah, morals and noble behavior reflect individual character, and have the potential to increase individual dignity and status.

Aqidah Akhlak combines these two aspects and reflects the basic principles of belief in Islamic teachings regarding the attitudes and behavior of a Muslim in awaiting God's blessings. Moral education consists of two main components, namely education and

morals. The goal is to help students gain strength in terms of religion, spirituality, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and skills that are important for themselves, society, nation and state [41]. In the context of Islamic education, moral education has a very significant role. The importance of faith and morals, especially for Muslims, cannot be ignored, because these attributes direct one's life goals. Mastery of strong religious values and beliefs will bring peace, both physically and spiritually, while moral instability can cause a crisis in a person's life. Morality plays a very important role in spiritual enlightenment and self-realization [42].

Create a contextual learning approach, where Islamic religious and ethical values are applied in everyday life situations that are relevant for students. As is the case with practical activities by involving students in practical activities that encourage the application of moral values in their actions [43]. This allows them to reflect on religious teachings in the context of real situations. Such as teaching students to have empathy for other people and understand their perspective in various situations, involving students in religious activities such as prayer, fasting, or other acts of worship in accordance with their Islamic beliefs [44]. And no less important is collaboration with parents in educating students' Islamic character. Schools and families can work together to strengthen understanding and application of moral values [45].

The fighting spirit of generation Z who seeks to strengthen the dimensions of their spirituality and morality must be based on strong religious beliefs and moral values. A lack of moral principles can result in a loss of faith and a deep relationship with God. On the other hand, faith-related outcomes often include many cases of immoral behavior and moral corruption [46]. Early research has shown that teaching moral beliefs plays an important role in shaping the character of students and guiding individuals toward good behavior. The millennial generation is at a crucial stage where continuous development based on high moral values is needed to shape them into a generation with strong morals [47].

Initial research also noted that the application of moral aqidah learning had a significant and successful impact in shaping students' morals. They learn to internalize morality in relationships with themselves, family, peers, and society in general, which is then reflected in their daily actions [48]. Especially in the educational environment, such as at school, the implementation of religious character building is very important in changing the behavior of students who may be impudent to become more moral. Schools have a very vital role in forming this religious character. Education is more than just conveying knowledge that can be applied to actual life situations, it also involves increasing the human value of existence through coaching and improving morals.

Moral aqidah education is very important for the millennial generation so that they can live according to the religion that has been established by tradition, emphasizing understanding of religion, values and morals. As the generation that will replace the baby boomer generation in leading the nation, meeting these group needs becomes very important. Education based on the principles of Aqidah and Morals provides comprehensive guidance for spiritual and physical development in line with Islamic teachings. Moral Aqidah education is the key to helping millennials navigate the challenges of this era and find solutions to these problems.

## 3.5. Strengthening Religious Literacy through Digital Literacy

Strengthening religious literacy through digital literacy is becoming increasingly relevant in the current digital era, where access to religious information is increasingly easier via the internet. This allows individuals to better practice their religion, understand religious aspects more deeply, and engage in broader religious discussions and activities. Strengthening religious literacy through digital literacy refers to efforts to increase individual understanding, knowledge and skills regarding religion or certain beliefs by using digital technology and online media as the main means. This includes the use of digital resources such as websites, apps, social media, videos, podcasts and other forms of digital content related to religion or belief.

Seeing that many concerns have arisen regarding the behavior of Generation Z in the digital era, such as cyberbullying and copyright violations. Collaboration between character education, religious moderation and digital literacy can play a very important role in creating a democratic society that adheres to various values, such as respecting others, maintaining justice and equality, and caring for the welfare of the surrounding community, as well as providing voluntary assistance. Character has long been considered something that has a special connotation. In other words, when someone is considered to have good character, it also means that that person has several other qualities such as trustworthiness, integrity, passion, and dependability.

Strengthening religious literacy through digital literacy is an approach that utilizes information and communication technology (ICT) to improve religious understanding and skills, as well as promote religious values in the digital era.[52] The following is how to implement strengthening religious literacy through digital literacy: 1) Provide easy access to quality digital resources about religion, including sacred texts, religious literature, and recorded religious lectures. This can be done through a website, online learning platform, or mobile application. 2) Utilize social media platforms to convey

educational messages about religion and ethics. These can be posts, short videos, or podcasts that address religious topics.[53] 3) Hold webinars and live broadcasts involving religious figures or spiritual leaders in discussions about religious teachings and their application in everyday life. 4) Encourage individuals to write blogs or articles about their religious understanding, religious reflections, or how religious values influence their actions [49]. Strengthening religious literacy through digital literacy can enable wider access to religious resources, facilitate independent learning, and promote better understanding of religion amidst the rapid development of information technology.

However, the concept of digital literacy encompasses more than just the use of technology; it encompasses an individual's understanding, skills, and ability to operate, evaluate, and participate effectively in an ever-evolving digital world. When we talk about strengthening religious literacy through digital literacy, this means increasing individuals' understanding and skills in using digital technology to understand, practice and enrich their religious dimensions.[54] The following are several important aspects in the concept of digital literacy that are relevant to strengthening religious literacy, starting from understanding digital texts, evaluating information, online research skills, active participation in online religious discussions, and being able to involve the ability to think critically about the impact of digital technology on religion and society. and participate ethically in online discussions and activities related to religion.[55]

By strengthening digital literacy in religious contexts, individuals can better integrate digital technologies in their religious practices, maintain a deeper understanding of religious values, and better participate in online religious communities.[56] This can help them overcome the challenges and opportunities that arise in the digital era in the context of religious literacy. Seeing the many moral degradations that occur in the current digital era. So what we can do as one of the efforts that can be made to reduce the occurrence of moral degradation is religious literacy [49].

Understanding real religion makes a person less literate in religious matters. Religious literacy [50] not only interpreted as knowledge of a particular religion. Nor is it just being able to read certain religious texts (both sacred and profane). Religious literacy presupposes several things: first, a basic understanding of the central texts that are the core of religion, history and contemporary manifestations of religious traditions that are shaped according to certain social, political and cultural contexts. Second, religious literacy presupposes the ability to see and overcome various political, social and cultural dimensions of a religion in a certain time and space [51].

By strengthening religious literacy, it is hoped that learning can be interactive, dialogical and argumentative. Religious literacy seeks to know religion. Proposes arguments in various variations. Understands existing religions, not to blame and judge each other, but so that they can refute each other, agree with each other in disagreement. This is possible because religious literacy is religious learning that is not only doctrinal, but contextual.[57] Indeed, religious literacy is usually characterized by a focus on understanding texts, both sacred texts and other religious texts. Usually this is conveyed by kyai, ustaz, or religious figures who request or give religious lectures. So, usually there are those who accept literacy in terms of religion. First seen in his mastery of religious texts.[58]

Religious literacy is not just about the ability to read in the sense of the skill of 'spelling' religious texts.[59] However, religious literacy is a combination of the ability to read religious texts, harmonize the information and knowledge in these religious texts, see and analyze them in various contexts, for further use in one's religious life. In this way, strengthening religious literacy can play an important role in overcoming moral degradation among generation Z, so here the researchers found several efforts to reduce moral degradation among generation Z and future generations with several strengthening strategies through religious literacy.

## 4. Conclusion

Moral degradation amidst what is happening now in the digital era where all access and freedom of information is easily obtained. The impact of moral degradation covers all groups without exception. With advances in technology in the digital era, it is increasingly proving that moral degradation is right in front of us and is very worrying. Several indicators of deviations from norms carried out by all groups include deviations from religious norms, deviations from social norms and deviations from politeness ethics. Seeing that there is so much moral degradation that is happening right now, one of the efforts we can take to reduce the occurrence of moral degradation in the digital era is religious literacy. Good religious literacy can also be connected to the formation of an inclusive and tolerant understanding of religion. Improving the quality of literacy can be the first step to increasing our religious literacy, thereby making religious people pious, as well as being a good country. Based on these results, it can be recommended that religious literacy is important from an early age, even in small things.

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[51] Because religion is the last bastion when it comes to arguing with these people, they will bring up human rights as a shield of protection against their behavior that violates norms. Prevention of moral degradation can be done by thoroughly understanding the relationship with Allah SWT (Hablum Minallah) and the relationship with humans (Hablum Minannas), in other words, when humans understand how they relate to Allah, they will know what things are prohibited by Allah and which what is permitted as well as what risks will be borne when violating what is not permitted so that they will not dare to commit deviations, so relationships with humans are not just about socializing but also creating a good environment to form a good person too, If both can work well, it can create people who understand morality in life. I. Hamid, cegah

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