

# The *Merdeka Belajar*-based Digital Literacy Skill of Indonesian Language Courses as The Effective Mean to Improve Islamic Characters at Economic Faculty of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang

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## ABSTRACT

**Abstract:** This research is themed on *Merdeka Belajar*-based Digital Literacy Skill for Indonesian course as an effective facility to improve the Islamic character of Economic Faculty students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang. This research analyzed the *Merdeka belajar*, self-directed learning-based digital literacy skills in an Indonesian language course, starting from the plan, implementation, and evaluation. The improved Islamic characters of the students were based on honesty (*sidiq*), trust (*amanah*), sharing (*tabligh*), and intelligence (*fathonah*). The research subjects were the management and accounting students of an Indonesian language course. This descriptive statistic research collected the data by distributing a questionnaire on Google Forms. The results showed the planning aspect obtained a percentage of 59.9%; implementation (57.25%); and evaluation (62.3%). The results showed that the self-directed learning-based digital literacy in the Indonesian language course effectively improved the Islamic characters of the Economic Faculty students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang.

Abstrak: Penelitian bertema Kemampuan Literasi Digital Berbasis Merdeka Belajar Mata Kuliah Bahasa Indonesia Sarana Efektif Peningkatan Karakter Islami Pada Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang. Penelitian dilaksanakan untuk menganalisis kemampuan literasi digital mahasiswa berbasis merdeka belajar pada mata kuliah Bahasa Indonesia mencakup perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Peningkatan karakter Islami dipaparkan sebagai pelaksanaan sikap sidiq, amanah, tabligh, dan fathonah. Subjek penelitian mahasiswa prodi Manajemen dan Akuntansi yang sedang mengikuti mata kuliah Bahasa Indonesia. Penelitian statistik deskriptif ini menggunakan pengambilan data dengan mengisi instrumen melalui *google form*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perencanaan 59,9 persen; pelaksanaan 57,25 persen; dan evaluasi 62,3 persen. Hasil penelitian ini menyatakan bahwa kemampuan literasi digital berbasis merdeka belajar mata kuliah Bahasa Indonesia sarana efektif peningkatan karakter Islami pada Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang membutuhkan perhatian untuk peningkatan.

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## INTRODUCTION

At higher educational levels, the globalization issue demands information for the educational field and learning to prepare qualified and reliable graduates without neglecting the original national cultures. Therefore, students should receive some preparations, such as creative competence, critical thinking, innovation, collaboration, communication, and cultural sensitivity to be real national generations. They must also become flexible, skillful, and intellectual long-life-learners to deal with the changes and to be loyal and determined to the national culture (Hardiyanto, 2017).

Being long-life-learners require the students to follow the era development. In the present era, the necessity of digital literacy is vital for all higher education levels. Therefore, students must adapt to the era changes by mastering digital literacy to reach better futures. Digital literacy receives various influences. The reading intention and the awareness of digital literacy are important to instill.

Digital literacy activities are useful to foster competent students. Thus, they will be graduated with adequate skills and productivity. Digital literacy becomes an effective facility to improve Islamic characters. The Islamic characters include *sidiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah* (siamtafa). These Islamic characteristics are realized in Indonesian language culture by instilling speech politeness, task honesty, the diction of speech as oral competence development, and new idea production.

In general, the *Merdeka* curriculum for each course is useful to improve digital literacy skills based on each field. For example, the Indonesian language course for first-degree students in the Management study program must have equal and balanced management-based digital literacy by considering *siamtafa*. First-degree students of accountancy must have equal and balanced digital literacy skills based on accountancy by considering *siamtafa*. This literacy demand requires the higher education level to promote various training in developing the students' potencies. **Industrial involvement to promote internships provides industrial advantages** (Rinandiyana et al., 2021). The internship program requires collaboration between corporations and universities to realize maximum results.

This research has both theoretical and practical urgencies. Theoretically, this research mapped the digital literacy skill standard for the students to improve their Islamic characters, the effective strategy to improve the digital literacy skill of the students, and the evaluation of digital literacy skills of management and accountant study programs at the Economic Faculty of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang. The results would be the benchmark of successful and effective digital literacy skill improvements of the students based on Islamic characters as the basics of further research development. Practically, this research's urgencies were (1) to allow the lecturers to map the standards, strategies, and evaluations to improve the digital literacy skill of students at the Economic Faculty of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang; (2) to allow the students to understand the standards, strategies, and evaluations of digital literacy skill improvements of the students; (3) to allow researchers improving the implementation of standards, strategies, and evaluations of digital literacy skill improvements of the students; and (4) to allow any funding institution to improve the advancement of researchers on digital literacy skill improvement at the university.

From the explanations, the researchers formulated these research questions: (1) how is the effectiveness of digital literacy skills of the students based on the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum to improve the Islamic characters of the students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang? (2) how is the digital literacy skill of the students based on *the Merdeka Belajar* curriculum to improve the Islamic characters of the students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang? (3) how is the digital literacy skill evaluation of the students based on *the Merdeka Belajar* curriculum to improve the Islamic characters of the students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang?

The following paragraphs contain explanations about digital literacy skills, the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum, the Indonesian language course, and Islamic character improvement.

### Digital Literacy Skill

Digital literacy refers to an interest, attitude, and individual skill in applying digital technology and communication tool to access, manage, integrate, analyze, and evaluate information; and construct, create, and communicate new knowledge to other individuals by participating effectively in the community (Kurniawan, 2016). Digital literacy dominates the 21st-century technology advancement moreover for higher education levels.

Developing digital literacy with the principle of primary development refers to digital literacy development principles. The basic digital literacy principle covers (1) understanding, (2) dependency, (3) social factors, and (4) curation (Sinta, 2022: 68). The understanding covers idea-extraction skills implicitly and explicitly from certain media. The inter-dependency refers to the method of medium to connect with other matters potentially, metaphorically, ideally, and literally. Social factors include the given information to determine the long-term success of the applied media and to establish an organic ecosystem to find, share, and

store information; and reconstruct media. Curation refers to storing information in social media, such as saving the content via the 'save-to-read-late' option. This definition illustrates the related literacy with a skill to understand the values of information and store the information for further ease of access and long-term benefits (Umar, 2019).

With correct digital literacy, students could define and use the skill effectively and efficiently. The inter-dependency to complement digital literacy could be used positively. The social factors influenced the urgency of digital literacy development. The curation of digital literacy management must be effective to ensure the positive influence of learning.

These primary principles of education require educational attention in terms of students' literacy improvement both in terms of technological literacy and data-consumption literacy (Rianto, 2019). Technological literacy, consuming literacy, and digital literacy requires attention and independent efforts in their development. Positive digital literacy objectives could be developed based on influential complementary components.

The developed digital literacy includes valuable character, personality, behavior, dignity, and feature (Khasanah & Herina, 2019). The educational world must develop digital literacy to establish better national characters and to prepare for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century education era. This literacy, based on Islamic characters, has the positive basics to promote self-development. Digital literacy includes data, technology, and humanity are the character demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Budimansyah et al., 2019).

Digital literacy dominates educational development in this 21<sup>st</sup>-century era. This era provides flexibility for the applied system from the simple and the complex system. The system may quickly develop and accurately develop. These developments receive influenced by educational quality. Educational quality influenced the personal aspect, social consequence, and national fate (Siregar, 2020). The personal aspect must be supported by correct understanding, social skills, and curation. The personal aspect becomes an important part to motivate digital literacy development.

In recent forums, digital literacy can be the solution to improve the educational quality of Indonesia. Some research results found the indication of national advancement is the literacy culture of the people (Sutrisna, 2018). From the statement, literacy is important to understand, apply, and habituate. The other definition of literacy is - real skills, such as reading and writing despite the methods of developing the skills and the trainers of the skills (UNESCO, 2020). The definition limitations are on individual reading and writing skills. In this research, the individuals are the students. Literacy, in a complex definition, refers to listening, reading, writing, speaking, and problem-solving skills. The skills are covered by the Indonesian language so the preparation must be optimal.

The developed digital literacy skills of the students are based on the standard competence of elaborated information literacy by ACRL. The indicators are (1) a skill to determine the type and feature of information, (2) a skill to access the required information effectively and efficiently, (3) a skill to evaluate information and the information source critically, (4) a skill to use and inform, and (5) a skill to understand the information issue (Lestari & Andriani, 2019). This digital literacy covers four language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The other definition points out that digital literacy is the skill to understand and use information in various forms from various sources. Then, the individual could present the information digitally in a computerized format (Mustakim et al., 2020). Thus, digital literacy falls into specific format literacy.

Literacy, in the Indonesian language, is originally taken from the English word, literacy. The root of the word is Greece language, *literatus*. Literacy refers to writing and reading skills or cognitive and psychomotor capabilities. Thus, individuals with excellent literacy could manage information and knowledge for a better life (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2021). This definition does not only deal with reading and writing but complex skills.

The development of literacy requires Information Literacy Class, ILC. The objectives of ILC are to improve the student's skills in reviewing information sources at the library, improve students' skills in using information from the library, and improve students' skills to use a set of writing tools to prevent plagiarism practices. ILC is also useful to improve students' skills in publishing their scientific works (Rahmawati, 2021).

Literacy skill requires effective and synchronized reasoning. Reasoning refers to the process of concluding the given facts (Yustinah, 2021). Digital literacy with effective reasoning leads to effective works to describe individual literacy skills optimally. Therefore, literacy skill also refers to reasoning skills.

The practice of literacy skills is based on certain motifs, such as (1) creativeness and new matter tendencies, (2) efficiency and effectiveness, (3) objective accomplishment and expectation to reach the objectives, (4) job for better living, and (5) personal awareness (Alhadi et al., 2022). Literacy skills based on these motifs have important roles to improve the students' literacy skills.

### ***Merdeka Belajar Curriculum (Freedom of Learning Curriculum)***

*Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* program of the Ministry of Education and Culture is regulated within the Ministerial Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic Indonesia, Number 3, the Year 2020 about the National Standard of Higher Education (The National News of Republic Indonesia in 2020 No. 47). The developed program refers to the educational theory and competency-based curriculum achievement. The *Merdeka Belajar* program facilitates students to develop their talents and interest in new situations.

*Merdeka* campus provides the students freedom to study non-chosen major courses. This effort aims to improve the educational quality as mandated by the Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim (Dirjen Kemdikbud, 2020). *Merdeka* campus has undetermined strengths compared to other programs, such as the freedom to determine the preferred course as mandated by the Minister of Education and Culture (CNN Indonesia, 2020). This program provides a three-semester course privilege of non-major courses. Thus, the students could be more active, creative, innovative, and collaborative. They can collaborate with other students from other majors, faculties, and universities. In this era with various problems and new problems, students must be capable of finding their passions to deal with the real world and the 4.0 industrial revolution era; and to be the real human based on the heart, intellectual, and conscience (Nurhayani Siregar, 2020)

*Merdeka Belajar* provides the students with on-the-job training opportunities as an effective strategy to prepare the students for real future life. The internship program for students becomes the conceptual program of *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* or Freedom of Learning – Campus of Freedom (MBKM). The principles of MBKM are (1) promoting student exchange, (2) providing internships, (3) providing learning assistance at the educational unit, (4) researching, (5) promoting a human-based project, (6) promoting graduation, (7) having independent project or study, and (8) developing villages with the implementation of the thematic community service program.

The internship has two MBKM principles to succeed in the learning process of the students. Thus, the internship concept must be prepared excellently to allow the students to understand the concept.

The internship program is a part of an integrated training system by directly working. The process also involves expert supervisors from the expert employees or laborers at the corporation so that the students could master the skills. This program provides the initial descriptions for the students to understand, recognize, and prepare for their future by directly observing and practicing the obtained knowledge from the classes (Pemerintah Indonesia, 2003).

An internship is a primary activity for students from the campus. The program provides various advantages, such as

- 1) Practicing the obtained knowledge
- 2) Learning to socialize
- 3) Improving self-quality
- 4) Exploring some careers or jobs
- 5) Improving relationships in a professional environment
- 6) Gaining more experience for future curriculum vitae
- 7) Understanding other individual characters
- 8) Living in diversity
- 9) Learning office politics
- 10) Earning for living

The implementation of the program is based on the Labor Law, Article 2: (1) internship is promoted by a corporation that has training units, (2) corporations without training units could establish collaboration with job-training institute, (3) the mentioned training unit should have (a) the organizational structure, (b) training mentors and advisors from the competent employees, (c) classrooms for learning theoretically and practically, and (d) the promoted training program scheme. Article 3 explains that a corporation could only accept apprentices for maximally 30% of the total employed employees (Pemerintah Indonesia, 2016).

This regulation provides huge opportunities for apprentices to gain knowledge directly from the expert and professional employees' corporation (Putri et al., 2021). The students also have opportunities to join the internship program.

## Indonesian Language Courses

Indonesian language, within the social domain, is a vital communication mean to create and maintain relationship among individuals.

Thus, language is important for human communication life and the source of community life. These facts are undeniable. Language and community are inseparable because the community always uses language to communicate. Language definitions within social perspectives are: (1) systematic matter, (2) arbitrary matter, (3) vocal and visual symbols, (4) conventionalized forms of the referred meaning, (5) communication mean, (6) language as community operation, (7) language for human, and (8) language for universal characteristics of human.

Language has a unique system from one to another. A unique language system can be learned within the optimally arranged system principle. Language is a set of arbitrary symbols. Therefore, one language to another language has different, specific, and unique symbols and can be learned with similar principles. Language is a set of vocal and visual symbols to conventionalize the referred meaning. Language is for communication. Language is a community operation and is a useful means for humans. Thus, language can be mastered by many people with universal characteristics. These language perspectives describe the language within the social domain.

Indonesian language within the social domain has the role of social communication mean for the speakers' life. Language as the social connecting mean is irreplaceable by other languages (Syukri Syamsuri Andi, 2020).

Language also has an academic role as the mean to deliver learning materials and modes of writing scientific work. Therefore, Indonesian language courses should deliver historical matters and the development of the Indonesian language to instill national pride in the national language. Indonesian language position and function are to determine the urgency of the language. The variety of Indonesian language and discourse within a scientific text is observable in higher education courses. Language politeness, diction, sentence grammar, paragraph principle, reasoning, and paragraph development are useful for courses. Scientific work and reproduction, scientific articles, standardized spelling of the Indonesian language, and the applied principle of writing a scientific article are the requirements for students to develop personal potency, scientific potency, and personal development (Yustinah, 2021).

The 1945 Constitution, Article 36, explains the legal urgency of language, "the national language is the Indonesian language." Thus, the Indonesian language has a vital position in the nation. Therefore, students at all educational levels should learn the Indonesian language as the media to deliver knowledge or introduction.

## Islamic Characters

Character refers to a set of cognition, attitude, behavior, motivation, and skill. Characters include the attitude to perform the best, intellectual capacity, such as critical thinking and moral reasoning; honesty, responsibility, moral principle practice, interpersonal and emotional skills to interact effectively, and commitment to contribute to the community and the people. Characters are human behavioral values related to God the Almighty, personal state, inter-individual, environment, and nation. The realizations of characters include thought, attitude, feeling, speech, and action based on religious norms, law, custom, culture, and ethics (Abdur Rohman, 2019).

Active character development in classroom learning should involve moral dilemma discussion. This method should be based on Islamic values that evidently could improve the learners' character (Murdianto, 2019). This method should be applied continuously, including at higher education levels because the method directly influenced the course and daily life of the students.

Islamic education with Islamic character has an important mission to humanize people, to make a developed human with all potencies they have. Thus, they can act based on the applied regulation by Allah. The indications of excellent humans are having valuable characters or personalities. In the educational field, these matters are important for the students (Danang Dwi Basuki, 2020).

The advanced technological development brings problems to educational life, for example, anarchy, moral decadency, student brawl, bullying, cheating, and many more (Munfaridatus Sholihah Abdah & Windy Zakiya Maulida, 2020).

The realizations of Islamic characters include (1) having an Allah-oriented objective, (2) paying attention to rational development, (3) paying attention to the emotional quotient, and (4) learning from habituation (Yuliharti, 2018). From the explanations, the students must improve their Islamic characters by being honest (*sidiq*), trusted (*amanah*), delivering the truth (*tabligh*), and always learning (*fathonah*).

## METHOD

This descriptive statistic design research analyzed the data descriptively (Sugiyono, 2017). The research described the collected data without generalizing it. The applied method described the findings to formulate the problems about each

investigated variable description. The researchers formulated the data to describe the factual results. The researchers simplified the descriptive statistic method in the form of calculation, table, and diagram.

The researchers involved the management and accounting students. The subjects had to fill in the instrument based on the ongoing facts. (Sutrisno et al., 2017) also explains that data collection should be from various settings, sources, and methods. The researchers collected various data based on the research subjects. They were the students of A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, and A6 classes from the Management study program; the A1 and A2 classes from the accounting study program; the evening class and weekend class of the accounting study program; and a class from the agribusiness study program. The researchers applied inclusion criteria to select the subjects. The applied inclusion criteria were based on ongoing events during the courses (Ariyati et al., 2020) at the Economic Faculty of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang, consisting of 9 classes or learning groups from the management and accounting study program.

Table 1 shows the learning groups or classes of the current research.

Table 1. the Research Subjects

Number	The Learning Groups/Classes	Research Sample
	A1 Class (First Degree of Management)	51 - 6
2	A2 Class (First Degree of Management)	51- 4
3	A3 Class (First Degree of Management)	45
4	A4 Class (First Degree of Management)	35
5	A5 Class - the Employee Class (First Degree of Management)	4
	Kelas Malam A6 (S1 Manajemen)	A6 Class - the Evening Class (First Degree of Management)
6	Kelas A1 (S1 Akuntansi)	A6 Class - the Evening Class (First Degree of Management)
7	A2 Class (First Degree of Accounting)	17
8	The Evening Class (First Degree of Accounting)	3
	The Weekend Class (First Degree in Accounting)	3
9	A class of the Agribusiness Program	13
	Total	244

The researchers applied two instruments. The first part consisted of a plan, implementation, and evaluation of the students' digital literacy skill improvements. The second part dealt with the interview instruments, consisting of the students' comments about digital literacy skill improvement.

The first instrument investigated these aspects: (1) introduction, (2) objective, (3) implementation, (4) stage, (5) material, (6) reference, and (7) assessment and evaluation. The second part of the instrument consisted of interview guidelines for the students in the form of written and dialog scripts in an online manner. The interview was useful to complement the given data from the students.

Here are the stages of the research.

- (1) Determining the research subjects based on the attendance lists of the students in the Indonesian language courses
- (2) Arranging the instrument based on the predetermined criteria, such as the students' literacy skill improvements
- (3) Filling out the questionnaire via Google Forms by the students Processing the questionnaire by analyzing and creating the percentages from the answer options
- (4) Processing the questionnaire by analyzing and creating the percentages from the answer options
- (5) Interpreting the analyzed data results in the conclusion part
- (6) Interpreting the concluded data process as the final research conclusion

- (7) Interpreting data by confirming the research results to the research subjects to maximize the correctness percentage interpretation and minimizing the research errors
- (8) Describing the interpreted data comprehensively

## RESULTS

The researchers distributed the questionnaire and interviewed the subjects to reveal the management and accounting-based digital literacy skills at the research site. The improved digital literacy skills were based on accounting management and principle. From the managerial and accounting contexts, the information is important to fill in the instruments, take photographs, and interview the research subjects. From those applied media, the researchers found agreements or contracts between the students and the lecturers during the learning process.

This research involved five classes of the first degree of the management program and a class of the first degree of the accounting program. The data sources provided the following described aspects: (1) introduction, (20 objectives, (3) implementation, (4) stage, (5) material, (6) reference, and (7) assessment and evaluation. From these aspects, the researchers provided these explanations.

### 1) Introduction Aspect

The introduction aspect consisted of a preface that took the related information about the primary literacy of each course and the agreed course topics for the students at the research site. Table 2 describes the collected data results of the aspect.

Table 2. The Introductory Aspect of the Learners' Digital Literacy Skill Improvements

Questions	Statements/ Question Indicators	The Most Chosen Alternative Answers	Percentages Respondents (244)	Analysis
1	The <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy in the Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve the Islamic characters and to make the students apply digital literacy based on the following conditions.	(b) Once a week based on the needs and the agreements to work on the task	117 respondents 48 %	The improved digital literacy skills of the students based on the needs with the agreed topics by students and lecturers (directed topic)
2	The <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of the Indonesian language course as the effective mean to improve Islamic characters allowed both students and lecturers to discuss certain topics with certain activities.	(a) The recent topics became the discussion matters.	152 respondents 62.3%	
Percentages			55.25%	

### 2) The Objective Aspect

The objective aspect consisted of the goal of digital literacy skills for the students at the research site. Table 3 describes the collected data results of the aspect.

The Objective Aspect of the Learners' Digital Literacy Skill Improvements

Questions	Statements/ Question Indicators	The Most Chosen Alternative Answers	Percentages Respondents (244)	Analysis
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3	The <i>merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of the Indonesian language course became the effective mean to improve the Islamic characters and had to be promoted periodically with certain themes.	(a) The students of the management study program used management references. The students from the medicine study program used medicine references. Then, the students from the engineering program used engineering references.	139 respondents 57 %	The improved digital literacy skills of the students were based on the reference and the objectives of the academic skill improvement of the students.
4	The students of the management study program used management references. The students from the medicine study program used medicine references. Then, the students from the engineering program used engineering references.	(b) Improved academic skills of the students	142 respondents 58.2%	
Percentages			57.6%	

### 3) The Implementation Aspect

This aspect consisted of conditions and considerations, implementation technique, and criteria of the research subjects. Table 4 shows the results of the collected data from this aspect.

Table 4 the Implementation Aspect in Improving the Students' Digital Literacy Skills

Questions	Statements/ Question Indicators	The Most Chosen Alternative Answers	Percentages Respondents (244)	Analysis
5	The <i>merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of the Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve Islamic characters conditionally with some consideration	(a) Based on the curriculum and the applied <i>Kampus Merdeka</i> model.	168 respondents 68.9 %	The implementation of digital literacy skill improvement for the students was based on the implementation of <i>Kampus Merdeka</i> model, module, balanced theory, and related practices within the study field.
6	The <i>merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skill of the Indonesian language course became the effective mean to improve the Islamic characters of the students.	(a) The learning gained assistance from PPT implementation and balanced theory and practice.	211 respondents 86.5%	
7	The <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of the Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve Islamic characters.	(a)	190 respondents (77,9%)	



The learning should be supported by other courses with the relevant criteria of the major.	
Percentages	77.8%

#### 4) The Aspect of Stages

The aspect of digital literacy skill improvement stages for the students must receive communication skill support, basic skills, and collaboration between students and lecturers. Table 5 describes the aspect of stages

Table 5. The Aspect of Stages for Learners' Digital Literacy Skill Improvement

Questions	Statements/ Question Indicators	The Most Chosen Alternative Answers	Percentages Respondents (244)	Analysis
8	The <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve Islamic characters by using the supported stages	(a) by the students' personalities based on major development.	141 respondents 57.8 %	The stages of students' digital literacy skill Improvements based on the students' communication indicators, given problems, and collaborations between students and lecturers.
9	<i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skill of Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve Islamic characters with the implementation of students' basic skills	(a) to formulate the ongoing events responsibly.	112 respondents 45.9%	
10	<i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skill of Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve Islamic characters based on the consequences	(a) of the lecturers and students and the principles of <i>Merdeka belajar</i> .	103 respondents 42.2%	
Percentages			48.6%	

#### 5) The Learning Material Aspect

The learning material aspect consisted of the learning material and the students' digital literacy skill improvements. Table 6 describes the results of the data collection on the aspect.

Table 6. The Material Aspect in Improving the Students' Digital Literacy Skill Improvement

Questions	Statements/ Question Indicators	The Most Chosen Alternative Answers	Percentages Respondents (244)	Analysis
11	The <i>merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve the Islamic characters to study related materials by the higher education curriculum and the <i>Merdeka belajar</i> principles.	(a)	119 respondents 48.8 %	The material of the students' digital literacy skill improvements based on the higher education curriculum with balanced educational characteristics, knowledge,
12	The <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of the Indonesian language course were effective for Islamic characters by referring to the standard text with characteristics.	The content of the text consisted of balanced knowledge and skill.	104 respondents 42.6%	

	and skills
Percentages	45.7%

### 6) The Reference Aspect

The reference aspect in improving students' digital literacy skills of the students was based on the graduates' necessity for up-to-date references. Table 7 shows the data collection results of the aspect.

Table 7. The Reference Aspect in Improving the Students' Digital Literacy Skills

Questions	Statements/ Question Indicators	The Most Chosen Alternative Answers	Percentages Respondents (244)	Analysis
13	The <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of the Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve Islamic characters by using references with certain criteria and the graduates' necessity standards.	(a)	106 respondents 43.4 %	The reference of improving digital literacy skills based on the graduates' necessity standards and up-to-date
14	The <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of the Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve Islamic characters by using references, at least recent 2 years, with certain criteria and the graduates' necessity standards.	(a)	120 respondents 49.2%	book implementation for the last two years.
	Percentages		46.3%	

### 7) The Assessment and Final Evaluation

The assessment and final evaluation involved the Indonesian language lecturer based on the evaluation system. The students could also apply digital literacy skills within the academic and social domains. Table 8 describes the data collection results of the assessment and evaluation aspects.

Table 8. The Aspect of Assessment and Final Evaluation for Learners' Digital Literacy Skill Improvement

Questions	Statements/ Question Indicators	The Most Chosen Alternative Answers	Percentages Respondents (244)	Analysis
15	The evaluation and the assessment of <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of the Indonesian language course were effective to improve the Islamic characters promoted by	(a) lecturers by considering the predetermined evaluation system.	137 respondents 56.1 %	The lecturers assessed and evaluated by applying the academic and social matters based on <i>Merdeka belajar</i> .
16	The <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of the Indonesian language course became an effective means to improve Islamic characters when	(a) the skills went along with academic skills within the academic and social domains and were based on the eight activities of <i>Merdeka belajar</i> .	161 respondents 66%	
	Percentages		61.5%	

From the interview, the researchers obtained some suggestions from the students. This table shows the suggestions.

**Table 9. Comment/Suggestions**

<b>Study Program</b>	<b>Comment/Suggestions</b>	<b>Types of Comment</b>
Management		
Sub I	Excellent	Positive Comments
	Very Excellent	
	The learning could improve the <i>merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills	
	Very Interesting	
	<i>Merdeka</i> -based digital literacy skill is useful to improve students' skills.	
	Learning improves academic performance.	
	This research is interesting to apply on campus curriculum.	
	Interesting	
Sub 2	The students used digital references by selecting the preferred materials. Thus, the <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based digital literacy skills of Indonesian language course became an effective means.	Objective comments
	The lecturers could direct the learning process based on the interests and talents of the students. The lecturers could map the required competencies so that the students could develop the competencies optimally.	
	The learning improved the students' activeness and creativity.	
	Further research developments should apply the case study method and contribute to the community.	
	The digital literacy skill improvements were based on the lecturer-student contract.	
	Literacy facilitated the students to perceive courses as interesting matters.	
	Both lecturers and students must develop and improve their literacy skills so that digital literacy activities will go smoothly.	
	The <i>Merdeka kampus</i> literacy skills adjusted the major and the interaction between lecturers and students.	
	Both students and lecturers could apply the digital literacy-based skill to adapt to the advanced and modern era.	
	A survey is important to ensure the continuous program implementation with Islamic character improvement.	
Sub 3	Considering the meaningful and unique learning for every learning participant	Expectation
	The students had to join the predetermined program by the lecturers and the campus party.	

The applied learning for language courses should provide balanced theoretical and practical classes to prepare excellent graduates.
Campus academicians should make the students aware of digital literacy's importance.
The learning should prioritize the students' objectives to keep their literacy, starting from the digital and printed books; and also their preferences.
The learning should make the students understand more knowledge.
The students should improve their digital literacy skills with <i>Merdeka belajar</i> -based learning effectively and maximally.
Literacy learning should cover knowledge and skills based on each study program.

## DISCUSSION

From the results and the described data in the tables, the researchers found seven interpreted aspects.

### **The Plan of Digital Literacy Skill Standards for the Students as Effective Mean to Improve Islamic Characters**

The plan, in this research, consisted of (1) students' digital literacy skill improvements in each primary course and providing relevant topics with the current situation during the courses. This aspect indicated that the students' digital literacy skill implementation lasted based on the schedules and applied the relevant topics around the students. Thus, they could keep up with the development and changes; (2) the digital literacy skill improvements of the students improved the academic skills of the students by reading, understanding, and analyzing references by enriching knowledge. The objective of self-development should gain primary priority and support during the courses by keeping up with the changes. The plan of applying a relevant topic with this objective aspect should go in line with the students' literacy skill standard as the effective matter at the initial stage of the research.

### **The Implementation of Digital Literacy Skill Standards for the Students as an Effective Mean to Improve Islamic Characters**

The implementation of the learning to improve the students' digital literacy skills consisted of planning, implementing, designing materials, and designing the references. Here are the realizations of the aspects.

#### (1) The Implementation Aspect

This aspect achieved a percentage of 77.8%, promoted by the students with the guidance of the lecturers based on the courses. The efforts to improve digital literacy skills applied *kampus merdeka* model. The classroom learning used PPT files with balanced theoretical and practical materials. This effort became the realization of digital literacy skills to improve academic skills. The implementation aspect should be higher than 75%. However, the results required further improvement to reach optimum digital literacy skill improvements for the students.

#### (2) The Aspect of Stages

This aspect achieved a percentage of 48.6% with the support of students' communication, students' problem-formulation skills, and collaborations between students and the lecturers. The improved literacy skills of the students also led to improved problem-solving skills improvements. This improvement included the digital literacy improvement commitment. By improving the students' digital literacy skill stages, the achieved percentages of the students also kept increasing.

#### (3) the Material Aspect

This aspect achieved a percentage of 47.7% with the orientation of students' digital literacy skill materials based on the higher education curriculum, entrepreneurship, and internship. The *kampus merdeka*-based material and standardized text reference for the students' development had the orientation of managerial and accounting skills.

#### (4) The Reference Aspect

This aspect achieved a percentage of 46.3% with the reference to students' digital literacy skill improvements based on the graduate necessity standard and the up-to-date book implementation for the recent two years. The bases of the necessity were the managerial and accounting academics by considering the internship program. This matter was important to improve the reference aspect and the percentage.

#### **The Assessment and Final Evaluation for Learners' Digital Literacy Skill Improvement**

This aspect achieved a percentage of 61.5%. In this aspect, the lecturers assessed and evaluated by considering the determined evaluation system. The applied learning was effective to improve the Islamic characters because the students could apply their academic skills within the social and academic domains based on eight activities of *Merdeka Belajar* principles. The final assessment and evaluation for the management study program were based on the study program characteristics and so did the accounting program. The achieved percentage, 61.5%, indicated the improved digital literacy skills of management and accounting students. They had to improve their skills to realize *merdeka belajar*. The evaluation and assessment of the students' digital literacy skill aspects considered the evaluation system, the evaluation method, the evaluation principle, and the evaluation time.

The Indonesian language lecturers applied the evaluation system of the improved digital literacy skills of management and accounting students by considering the evaluation system of accounting and management study programs.

One of them was - emphasizing the tasks and activities of the students during the courses. The recording provided valid data.

The evaluation principles of digital literacy skill improvements of the students, from management and accounting programs, were based on the tasks and the responsibilities of the students during the given course semester and the course.

The evaluation time of the digital literacy skill improvement of the students was promoted at each end of task completion to keep the balance between the scores and the factual situations. Besides that, the students anticipated the task completion by the various assistances.

#### **The Interview Data Result Discussion**

The researchers grouped the interview results into three: positive, objective, and expected comments. The positive comments perceived the applied learning was useful. The improved literacy skills were useful to enrich the knowledge. This improvement was varied based on the curriculum to construct and develop the students' knowledge.

The objective comment shared the responses of the students to improve the awareness of the literacy importance for college. The students were eager to improve their knowledge for the future and improve their digital literacy skills anywhere for their future. The students must always improve their literacy skills to apply all aspects of Islamic characters in academic and social situations.

The expected comment indicated the improved digital literacy skills of the students effectively based on each study program. The improved digital literacy skills provided understanding for the graduates' futures. The improved digital literacy skills of the students were effective and maximum to improve the Islamic characters.

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

#### **Conclusion**

The improved digital literacy skill based on *Merdeka Belajar* of the Indonesian language course was effective to improve the Islamic characters of students of the Economic Faculty of Universitas Muhammadiyah Semarang, starting from the digital literacy standard plan, the implementation, and the evaluation of the digital literacy skill improvement. The stages covered seven aspects, such as introduction, objective, implementation, stage, learning material, reference, assessment, and final reference. The first aspect of *Merdeka belajar*-based digital literacy skill improvement required the agreed topics between the lecturers and the students, directed topic. The second aspect required the relevance of the reference and the objectives of the academic skill improvement of the students. The third aspect, the implementation of digital literacy skills, was based on *Kampus Merdeka model*, module, balanced theory, and related practices with the study field. The fourth aspect, the aspect of the stage, was based on the indicators of students' communication indicators, given problems, and collaborations between students and lecturers. The fifth aspect was based on the higher education curriculum containing entrepreneurship education and internship. The sixth aspect, the reference to digital literacy skill improvement, was based on the graduates' necessity standards and up-to-date book implementation for recent two years. The seventh aspect, assessment, and evaluation involved the participation of the lecturers by applying the social academic domain based on the internship program. These aspects are useful to answer the research questions.

From those aspects, the answered problems were (1) the plan of improving the *Merdeka belajar*-based digital literacy skill improvement became an effective means to improve Islamic characters was observable in the introduction and objective aspects; (2) the implementation of the learning could answer the aspects of implementation, stage, material, and reference; and (3) the evaluation of the improved digital literacy skills could answer the assessment and evaluation.

### Suggestions

The proposed suggestions consisted of positive, objective, and expected comments. The positive comments included: interest in the improved literacy skill to improve academic skills. Digital literacy could enrich knowledge, provide ease of access, and provide various literacy. The objective comments included: the improved digital literacy skill awareness of the students within the course environment, the eagerness to improve digital literacy, and the collaboration between the lecturers and the students to improve literacy. Some expected comments became balanced comments. These comments provided insights that digital literacy, in the form of *Merdeka belajar*-based digital literacy skill improvement, should gain attention. The improved competencies were observable in all courses to support the success of *Merdeka belajar*. With this *Merdeka belajar*-based literature, management and accounting students could improve their digital literacy competence skills.

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