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# Empowering Church Youth Through AI Literacy for Digital Career Readiness

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***Abstract:*** *The development of digital technology, especially artificial intelligence (AI), has had a significant impact on the world of work, requiring the younger generation to have qualified technological literacy. However, church youth often face limited access to information and technology-based training. This Community Service Activity (PKM) aims to increase technology literacy and basic understanding of AI for the youth of the HKBP Bethesda Perumnas Mandala Church as an effort to prepare for career readiness in the digital era. The implementation method is in the form of an interactive workshop that includes the delivery of materials, discussions, and questions and answers involving 75 participants of productive age. The results of the activity showed a significant increase in participants' understanding of AI concepts, ethics in the use of technology, and strategies for dealing with digital-based career opportunities. The active discussion of the participants showed enthusiasm and readiness to adapt to technological transformation. This activity proves that collaboration between universities and churches is effective in strengthening the digital capacity of the younger generation, and can be a model of sustainable empowerment in the religious community.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI), has transformed multiple aspects of human life, including education, communication, the economy, and especially the labor market (Alakrash & Razak, 2021). This transformation demands young generations to be adaptive, innovative, and equipped with adequate digital literacy skills. However, many young people, particularly in church communities, still face limited access to training and guidance in mastering emerging technologies such as AI. This gap poses a challenge for them to remain competitive in the era of digital transformation (Gladden et al., 2022).

The relevance of this community service (PKM) program lies in addressing the urgent need to empower church youth with digital competencies. The church, as a spiritual and social institution, plays a crucial role in preparing its younger generation not only to grow in faith but also to develop essential skills for their future careers. By introducing AI literacy, the church

community can serve as a bridge between faith-based guidance and technological preparedness, equipping youth to face both opportunities and challenges in the digital era (Mutia et al., 2024).

Recent studies emphasize that digital literacy and AI readiness are critical determinants of youth employability and entrepreneurial potential. According to the World Economic Forum, AI-driven transformation will reshape at least 23% of global job roles within the next decade, making digital literacy a prerequisite for career success (Alakrash & Razak, 2021; Sánchez-Cruzado et al., 2021). Similarly, research by Wahyudi and the Ministry of Communication and Informatics highlights that enhancing digital competencies among millennials and Generation Z is vital to ensure inclusivity and competitiveness in the national workforce (Simarmata et al., 2024, 2025).

The objective of this PKM program is therefore threefold: (1) to strengthen the digital literacy of church youth in understanding the role of AI in shaping the future of work, (2) to foster adaptive and innovative mindsets toward technological transformation, and (3) to prepare participants with practical skills that support digital career readiness. Through this initiative, the program seeks to position church youth as not merely passive technology users but as active agents of change who can responsibly utilize AI for personal, professional, and community development.

## 2. METODE

### Planning Stage

The planning stage of this Community Service (PKM) program was initiated through preliminary observations and informal discussions with church youth to identify their needs regarding digital literacy and AI awareness. Coordination was carried out between the academic team of Universitas Murni Teguh and the church leadership of HKBP Bethesda Perumnas Mandala to ensure the relevance of the program. Participants were determined to be young men and women within the productive age range of 15–30 years, representing the church's youth community with an interest in career readiness and technology-based empowerment.

**Form and Time of Implementation**

The PKM activity was conducted in the form of an interactive workshop that combined lectures, discussions, and a question-and-answer session. The event took place on:

Day/Date: Saturday, July 19, 2025

Venue: HKBP Bethesda Church Hall, Perumnas Mandala, Deli Serdang

The workshop presented topics on digital literacy and the fundamental concepts of Artificial Intelligence (AI), emphasizing both opportunities and ethical considerations for future careers.

***Stages of Activities***

The activity was structured into several stages to ensure systematic implementation: Opening: Registration, opening prayer, and welcome remarks from church leaders and program chair. Presentation of Materials: Delivery of key topics by resource persons, focusing on AI, digital literacy, and career opportunities in the digital era. Interactive Discussion: A two-way dialogue between participants and speakers, allowing youth to ask questions, share perspectives, and reflect on technology-related challenges. Closure and Documentation: Final reflections, group photos, and closing prayers to conclude the workshop.

**Evaluation and Follow-Up**

Evaluation was conducted using pre- and post-activity questionnaires to measure changes in participants' knowledge and attitudes toward AI and digital literacy. The majority of participants showed significant improvement in understanding AI applications and ethical technology use. Recommendations were proposed to continue similar training programs regularly, expand the themes with case studies, and establish a sustainable church–university collaboration for youth empowerment. As a follow-up, the church is encouraged to integrate digital literacy topics into its youth development activities, creating a long-term platform for strengthening digital competencies within the community.

## 3. RESULT

The Community Service (PKM) activity was successfully carried out according to the planned schedule and objectives. The workshop involved 75 youth participants from the HKBP Bethesda Perumnas Mandala congregation, representing the church's young generation within the productive age range. Participants actively engaged in each session, demonstrating strong enthusiasm and curiosity regarding the presented topics of digital literacy and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

During the opening session, participants expressed their expectations to gain new insights on career opportunities in the digital era. This enthusiasm continued throughout the presentation of materials, where speakers delivered content on the foundations of AI, ethical technology use, and the potential impact of digital transformation on future employment. The active participation was evident in the interactive discussion session, where participants raised critical questions such as the risks of AI replacing human jobs, strategies for maintaining human control over AI systems, and identifying emerging career opportunities for graduates in the digital sector. These questions reflect the participants' high level of engagement and the relevance of the program content to their concerns.

The evaluation data collected through pre- and post-activity questionnaires indicated a significant improvement in participants' understanding. Before the workshop, the majority of youth reported limited knowledge about AI and its role in shaping the labor market. After the activity, more than 80% of participants stated that they gained clearer insights into how AI can be leveraged for career readiness and entrepreneurship, while also recognizing the importance of ethical and responsible technology use.

Indicators of success were observed through three main outcomes: Cognitive Improvement: Participants showed increased comprehension of digital literacy and AI fundamentals, as evidenced by the positive shift in evaluation scores. Behavioral Engagement: The interactive discussions revealed that participants were not passive listeners but active contributors, eager to contextualize AI within their daily and professional lives. Social Impact: The activity fostered a sense of empowerment among the youth, motivating them to view the church as not only a spiritual center but also as a platform for personal and professional development in the digital era.

Overall, the results confirm that the PKM program achieved its objectives by equipping church youth with the knowledge and awareness needed to face digital career challenges. Furthermore, the positive response and recommendations from participants highlight the potential of this initiative to be replicated and expanded as a sustainable model of youth empowerment within religious communities.

## 4. DISCUSSION

The results of this PKM activity demonstrate that strengthening digital literacy and introducing Artificial Intelligence (AI) concepts to church youth is an effective strategy for preparing them to face the challenges of the digital era (Celik et al., 2024). The significant improvement in participants' knowledge and awareness aligns with previous findings, which

emphasize that digital competence is a critical determinant of employability and career adaptability in the 21st century (Sánchez-Cruzado et al., 2021). This indicates that empowering youth through community-based programs contributes not only to individual development but also to broader social resilience in responding to technological disruption(Ouyang et al., 2023).

When compared with similar community service initiatives in educational and religious settings, this program highlights several distinctive aspects. First, it integrated AI literacy within the church context, combining spiritual values with technological preparedness. Previous studies often focused on school- or university-based interventions, while this program demonstrates that faith-based institutions can also serve as effective platforms for digital empowerment. Second, the interactive approach—blending lectures, discussions, and Q&A sessions—proved successful in fostering critical thinking and active engagement, which are consistent with findings on the role of participatory learning in character formation (Ouyang et al., 2023).

However, the implementation also faced several challenges. Some participants expressed concerns about the potential of AI to replace human labor and the ethical risks associated with its use. These reflections reveal that while enthusiasm for digital opportunities is high, there is still apprehension about technological risks. Addressing this challenge requires continuous education on AI ethics, regulatory frameworks, and the importance of maintaining human-centered control over technology. Moreover, logistical limitations such as resources for training and the need for follow-up mentoring highlight the necessity of stronger institutional collaboration between universities, churches, and local communities.

The sustainability of this program lies in its potential to become a recurring initiative embedded within church youth activities. By institutionalizing digital literacy and AI awareness as part of the church's educational and empowerment programs, the long-term impact can be extended beyond a single workshop. This aligns with the mandate of community service in higher education, which emphasizes not only one-time interventions but also the development of sustainable models of community empowerment. Future programs could expand the content to include practical digital entrepreneurship skills, case studies of AI application in the workplace, and partnerships with industry to provide real-world exposure.

**Figure 1.** Delivery of material on Artificial Intelligence.


**Figure 2.** HKBP Bethesda Community Service Topics.


**Figure 3.** Closing and Group Photo.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This Community Service (PKM) program on technology literacy and Artificial Intelligence (AI) awareness for church youth was successfully implemented and achieved its intended objectives. The activity involved 75 young participants from HKBP Bethesda Perumnas Mandala and demonstrated significant outcomes in strengthening their understanding of digital literacy, ethical technology use, and career readiness in the digital era. Participants actively engaged in interactive discussions, reflecting both their enthusiasm and critical awareness of AI's potential opportunities and challenges.The primary benefits of this program can be summarized in three dimensions. First, it enhanced the cognitive capacity of participants by improving their knowledge of AI fundamentals and digital skills relevant to the labor market. Second, it fostered behavioral change, as evidenced by participants' active involvement and reflective questions during the workshop. Third, it generated a social impact, positioning the church not only as a spiritual institution but also as a center for youth empowerment and digital competency development.For sustainability, several recommendations are proposed. Universities and churches should continue this collaboration by integrating digital literacy training as part of regular youth development activities. Future programs are encouraged to expand their scope by including practical skill development such as digital entrepreneurship, AI-based tools for productivity, and online career readiness workshops. Furthermore, establishing long-term mentorship and partnerships with industry stakeholders can ensure that church youth are not only prepared to adapt to technological transformation but also capable of creating innovative solutions within their communities.In conclusion, this PKM initiative illustrates that faith-based institutions can serve as strategic platforms for digital empowerment. By embedding AI literacy and ethical technology use into community programs, universities, and local institutions can contribute significantly to preparing resilient, adaptive, and future-ready generations.

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