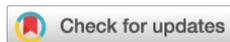


RESEARCH ARTICLE

Mobile-Based Informal Learning and Digital Evangelism: Theological Students' Use of Social Media in Indonesia

I Putu Ayub Darmawan^{1*} Evi Namsem¹

Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Simpson Ungaran, Indonesia



Correspondence to: I Putu Ayub Darmawan, Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Simpson Ungaran, Indonesia; Email: putuayub@sttsimpson.ac.id

Received: April 24, 2025;

Accepted: July 9, 2025;

Published: July 16, 2025.

Citation: Darmawan, I. P. A. (2025). Mobile-Based Informal Learning and Digital Evangelism: Theological Students' Use of Social Media in Indonesia. *Advances in Mobile Learning Educational Research*, 5(2), 1488-1500. <https://doi.org/10.25082/AMLER.2025.02.006>

Copyright: © 2025 Darmawan et al. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/), which permits all noncommercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.



Abstract: The development of digital technology has significantly simplified remote interaction and communication. Mobile phones have become an integral part of everyday life, including their use in gospel communication. This study explores how theology students in Indonesia utilize mobile phones for gospel communication, employing qualitative research methods. Data were collected via a Google Form containing open-ended questions, completed by 154 theology students from various provinces across Indonesia. The data were then analyzed using Microsoft Excel and NVivo 12 Plus software through stages of data reduction, grouping with pivot commands, meaning condensation through thematic analysis, and interpretation. The findings indicate that mobile phones play a significant and effective role in gospel communication among theology students. They enable users to share information and communicate easily, thereby expanding the reach and overall impact of the Gospel message. This research contributes to the development of effective strategies for using mobile phones and social media in theological education and offers a clearer understanding of how theology students in Indonesia engage with these technologies.

Keywords: digital media, Gospel communication, theology education, information technology

1 Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology and science has brought significant convenience to individuals utilizing digital media as a communication tool. Digital media facilitates remote interaction, allowing users to connect with others anytime and anywhere (Turnip & Siahaan, 2021). This development has transformed the field of communication, introducing a wide range of digital platforms and enabling users to access information with ease. According to Sari et al. (2018), digital media can be categorized into three main types: (1) networks that connect computers to other devices; (2) information technology, which is manifested through social media platforms that foster creativity and content production; and (3) archives, which serve as digital storage spaces for preserving acquired information.

Digital media and mobile phones are frequently used for self-presentation in online spaces, fostering connections with others (Karakose, Tülübaş, & Papadakis, 2022). They facilitate the expansion of social relationships and networks. As Zahid (2019) notes, digital media enables individuals to establish communication and collaborate with others. Modern digital platforms and mobile phones have significantly reshaped human communication by bridging geographic distances (Utama et al., 2022). Thus, digital media has a profound impact on its users—not only as a communication tool but also as a platform for sharing creative works (Munandar & Suherman, 2016), including videos, audio recordings, images, and more. Popular platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Snack Video are widely used (Diana et al., 2023), offering easy access to diverse content, including political news, sermons, entertainment, and beyond (Ronda, 2016). Furthermore, these platforms provide users with the freedom to exchange ideas, opinions, and information on various topics (Siregar, 2022). Unsurprisingly, digital media serves as a powerful medium for self-expression and content dissemination. As Sitompul (2020) highlights, one of the positive aspects of digital media is its ability to provide a space for writers to share personal journals. It also promotes awareness through advertisements and campaigns, allowing users to discover new information. Consequently, digital media benefits both content creators, who gain exposure through their posts, and users, who derive insights and value from the content they consume.

The advancement of communication technologies has heightened awareness of the need to use these tools effectively and with purpose (Pasasa, 2015). Badri (2022) underscores the importance of developing digital literacy skills to avoid harmful online behaviors, particularly as internet use continues to grow rapidly. Moreover, mobile devices and social media have become inseparable from modern life (Aripradono, 2020). Digital media supports seamless remote communication, allowing users to share information with friends, family, and acquaintances through social platforms (Tülübaş, Karakose & Papadakis, 2023). These technological advancements also offer significant opportunities for religious communities to disseminate the Gospel through digital channels. Missa (2021) argues that digital platforms provide a simple and accessible means for engaging in ministry. Christians, therefore, are encouraged to seize the opportunity to communicate the Gospel through available media. Communication plays a crucial role in spreading the Gospel to those who have not yet received salvation in Christ (Larencia, 2022). GP (2012) further explains that communication is the process through which the message of the Gospel is delivered to all people.

Christian communicators are thus encouraged to utilize digital media effectively to convey the Gospel message. When used wisely, digital media can serve as a beneficial, efficient, and effective tool for reaching specific target audiences. In the contemporary era, spreading the Gospel through digital media empowers believers and churches to leverage social media to reach broader and more diverse audiences (Utama et al., 2022).

The use of digital media as a space for theological discourse is an emerging phenomenon. Multiple studies have highlighted a substantial increase in the use of digital technologies, including social media, for communication, learning, and outreach. Zaluchu (2023) and Zaluchu et al. (2023) observed that engaging in theology within digital spaces has become inevitable due to technological advancement. Furthermore, Darmawan et al. (2024) examined discipleship processes in churches that integrated digital media, revealing new behavioral patterns in discipleship, particularly influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, research by Fröh and Robinson (2024) identified a post-pandemic shift toward digital platforms in various sectors, including religious institutions. Their study specifically analyzed how digital religious communication on social media can be used to evaluate the social resilience of church organizations.

Other studies have emphasized the effectiveness of digital media in the learning process (Papadakis et al., 2023a; 2023b). Barriers to communication and education caused by physical distance can be mitigated through digital technologies (Pramana et al., 2021). In the context of global communication, Sugiono (2021) demonstrated that digital technologies provide ample opportunities to support the future of marketing communications. Although previous research has contributed significantly to the understanding of digital media's role, few studies have thoroughly examined its use in the context of Gospel communication.

This study specifically addresses that gap by focusing on the use of digital media in Gospel communication among theology students. This focus is particularly relevant because today's theology students belong to Generation Z, a cohort widely recognized as digital natives. Consequently, it is essential to explore how theology students in Indonesia employ digital media in their efforts to communicate the Gospel.

Based on this background, the research poses the following question: How do theology students in Indonesia utilize digital media for Gospel communication? The objective of this study is to gain insights into the use of digital media for Gospel communication among theology students in Indonesia.

2 Methods

This study employed a qualitative research design, utilizing interview techniques to gather data. A total of 154 theology students from various provinces across Indonesia participated by completing a Google Form containing open-ended questions. The collected data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and NVivo 12 Plus software, following a systematic process that included data reduction, grouping via pivot commands, meaning condensation, thematic analysis, and interpretation. The analysis results were presented through visual formats such as charts, tables, and narrative summaries organized by thematic categories. Following the identification of key findings, a discussion was developed by comparing the results with existing theories and previous studies. The study draws on a range of scholarly sources published in peer-reviewed journals relevant to the use of digital media among theology students. Given its focus on the integration of digital media within the theological education context, the research also

incorporates Christian theological perspectives, particularly those aligned with contemporary technological developments.

3 Findings and Discussion

3.1 Participant Characteristics and Social Media Accounts of Theology Students

A total of 154 theology students participated in the study by completing the Google Form, representing 20 theological institutions located across various regions of Indonesia. The majority of participants (117 students) were from urban areas in Java, Bali, and South Sulawesi. The remaining participants came from regions such as Papua, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), Kalimantan, and Sumatra, with three students representing these more remote areas.

Collectively, the 154 students reported owning a total of 649 social media accounts, indicating that, on average, each student maintained approximately five accounts. These accounts covered a diverse range of social media platforms used by the students (see Figure 1).

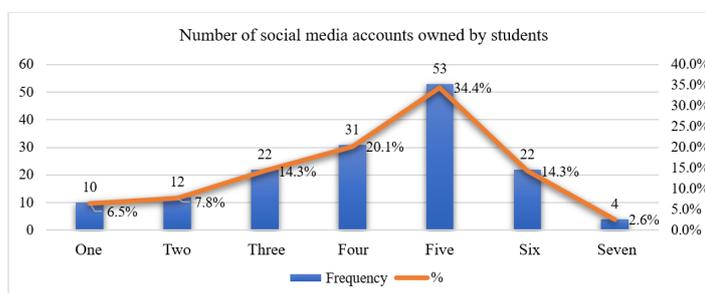


Figure 1 Number of Social Media Accounts Owned by Theology Students in Indonesia

The analysis presented in Figure 1 reveals that the majority of theology students own more than three social media accounts. This trend is likely influenced by advancements in mobile technology, which allow for the installation and simultaneous use of multiple social media applications on a single device. Such technological developments have significantly shaped students’ behavior in engaging with social media platforms.

The data show that theology students maintain an average of five social media accounts. The most frequently used platforms are WhatsApp (22.7%), Instagram (20.8%), and Facebook (20.2%). These are followed by YouTube (15.3%), TikTok (13.6%), Twitter (4.5%), and Snack Video (3.1%).

These findings indicate that theology students in Indonesia are active users of social media and engage with a wide range of platforms. The widespread use of multiple applications suggests that technological accessibility and familiarity play a crucial role in shaping digital habits. This research provides valuable insight into students’ digital behavior and can inform the development of targeted strategies for integrating social media effectively into theological education.

3.2 The Utilization of Digital Media in Gospel Communication

The term “digital” can be understood etymologically, as the word originates from the Greek word “Digitus”, meaning “fingers or toes”, referring to the ten digits of the human hand or foot (Telaumbanua & Butarbutar, 2022). “Digital” refers to something related to numbers used to represent information or a computational system connected to computers or the internet (Bawono, 2020; Chatterjee & Yadav, 2022). The utilization of digital media in gospel communication can be observed from various aspects, including: 1) the types of social media accounts most frequently used to communicate the gospel, 2) the frequency of sharing the Word of God through social media in a month, 3) the materials most often shared, and 4) the types of content created. The findings are presented in Figure 2.

From Figure 2, it can be seen that the three most commonly used mobile-based social media platforms for communicating the Gospel are WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook. In addition, some students also use YouTube, TikTok, Twitter, and Snack Video. The larger the text in the image, the more frequently the platform is used.



Figure 2 Most Used Social Media Accounts for Communicating the Gospel (Processed using Nvivo)

In general, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook are the most widely used mobile-based social media platforms. These platforms hold leading positions globally in terms of user numbers, suggesting that they offer significant opportunities for Gospel communication. According to [Diana et al. \(2023\)](#), social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook can effectively facilitate communication and information sharing, particularly in the context of Gospel outreach. [Nggebu et al. \(2023\)](#) suggest that WhatsApp can serve spiritual ministry purposes; in their study, it was used as a medium for prayer requests, highlighting its effectiveness in spiritual communication. Additionally, [Rossi et al. \(2022\)](#) found that Facebook and Instagram are the most popular platforms, particularly among younger users. Their popularity is largely attributed to their user-friendly features, which support content distribution, media sharing, and real-time social interaction ([Szeto et al., 2021](#)). These observations are consistent with the present study’s findings, which show that students frequently use these platforms. Mobile-based platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook can serve as digital spaces for theological engagement, given their broad user base. Christian teachings can be shared on these platforms, creating opportunities for interaction with a wider audience.

[Figure 3](#) illustrates the frequency with which students share the Word of God. Over the course of one month, the majority of students (100 individuals; 64.9%) shared the Word of God in video form 1–5 times, while the smallest group (3 individuals; 1.9%) shared videos 21–25 times. In terms of image-based content, most students (84 individuals; 54.4%) also shared the Word of God 1–5 times, while only 5 students (3.2%) shared images 21–25 times per month. Notably, a small number of students shared the Word of God through videos or images as frequently as 26–30 times within a month.

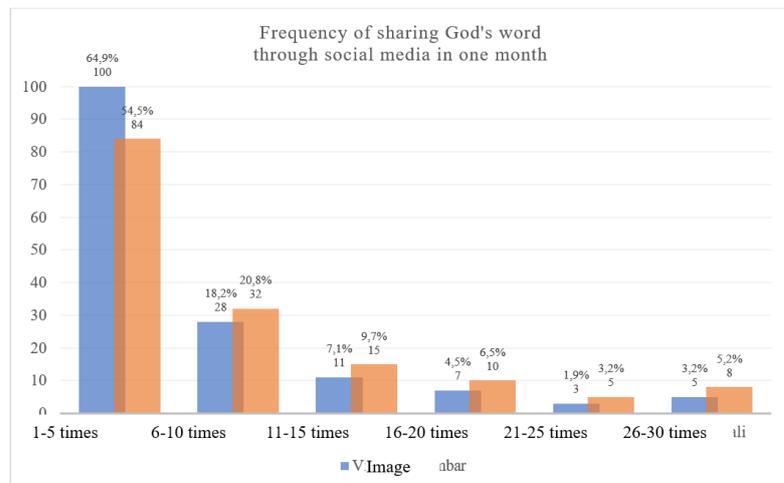


Figure 3 Frequency of students sharing the Word of God through social media in the form of videos or images within one month

These findings indicate that the use of social media for sharing Bible verses or devotional reflections remains relatively infrequent. Several factors may contribute to this low frequency, including limited time, lack of digital skills, or personal motivation. Nevertheless, the data suggest that mobile phones are being used effectively as tools for studying and engaging with the Word of God.

The findings presented in [Figure 4](#) indicate that the content most frequently shared by students centers on Bible verses or passages from Scripture. In addition, students often share materials related to love, motivation, and salvation. However, the data suggest that students have yet to fully develop or apply their skills in interpreting biblical texts or utilizing their theological understanding in social media communication. Despite being trained in hermeneutical methods and theological reasoning, most students primarily share straightforward Scripture verses, with content derived from deeper biblical analysis or theological reflection remaining underdeveloped.

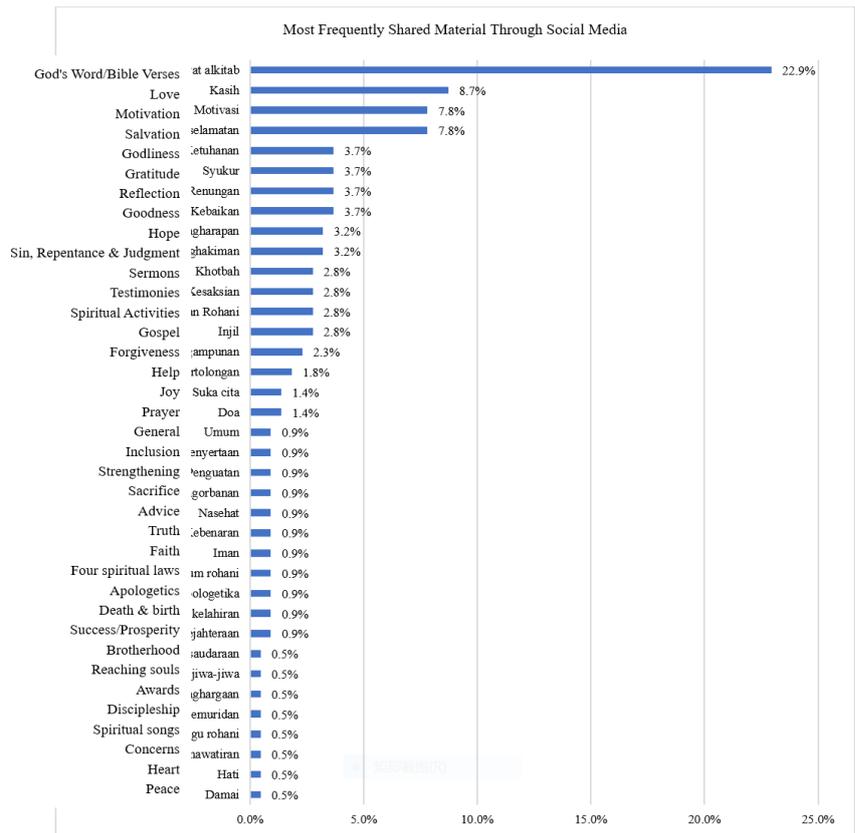


Figure 4 Most Frequently Shared Content by Students on Social Media

According to Darmawan and Triastanti (2020), theology students are equipped with theological knowledge and skills in biblical interpretation. Based on their findings, students should be capable of producing content that reflects theological insight and interpretive engagement with Scripture. Within the context of mobile learning, the data show that students are using mobile phones not only for communication but also as tools for learning and for sharing the Word of God.

The findings, as shown in Figure 3, indicate that students have not yet actively engaged in creating original social media content for evangelism. This suggests that mobile phones are not being fully utilized for content creation in the context of Gospel communication. This observation is further supported by the data presented in Figure 5, which show that the majority of students (47 individuals; 30.5%) do not create content themselves but instead share pre-existing material found on social media. Meanwhile, 34 students (22.1%) reported having created original content in the form of images and videos, and 5 students expressed an intention to create such content in the future.

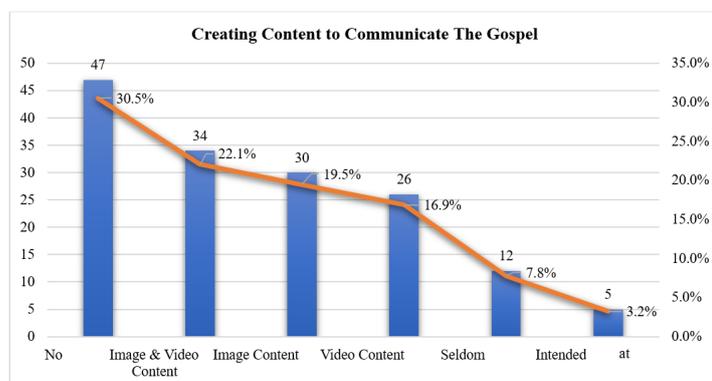


Figure 5 Students' Responses Regarding Content Creation for Evangelism

These findings highlight an untapped potential among theology students, most of whom belong to Generation Z—a cohort commonly identified as digital natives (Limilia et al., 2022; Vitelar, 2019). Despite their familiarity with technology, the data suggest that students' digital skills are not yet matched by a willingness or confidence to produce original content for evangelistic purposes. This points to a need for targeted training initiatives aimed at enhancing students' capacity to use mobile phones productively and creatively in the context of Gospel communication.

3.3 Obstacles for Students in Gospel Communication Through Social Media

Students expressed various obstacles in communicating the Gospel through social media and most of them are constrained by networks, quotas and a lack of self-confidence (Figure 6). All of these obstacles form subthemes and themes that hinder students in communicating the Gospel through social media.

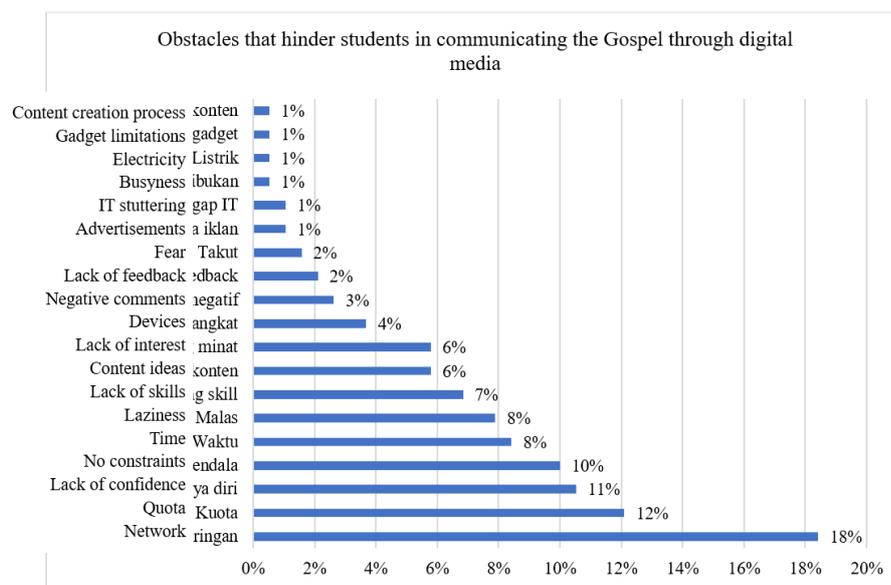


Figure 6 Challenges Faced by Students in Evangelizing Through Digital Media

The primary themes identified are divided into two categories: 1) External Challenges, comprising three subthemes: issues with internet connectivity, communication devices, and lack of social support; 2) Internal Challenges, comprising three subthemes: low self-esteem, time constraints, and limited knowledge about content creation. These findings are elaborated in greater detail in Table 1.

The research findings highlight various obstacles that students encounter in the process of evangelizing through digital media. These challenges can be categorized into two main themes. The first category consists of external challenges, which include three subthemes:

(1) Internet Connectivity: issues such as unstable networks, limited data plans, and power outages;

(2) Communication Devices: limitations related to outdated gadgets, intrusive advertisements, and a lack of technological fluency;

(3) Social Support: a lack of encouragement, negative comments, and insufficient feedback from peers;

(4) The second category includes internal challenges, also comprising three subthemes:

A. Low Self-Esteem: characterized by insecurity, lack of confidence, and reduced interest;

B. Time Constraints: resulting from busy schedules and limited availability;

C. Limited Knowledge: referring to insufficient skills and unfamiliarity with content creation tools and processes.

As shown in Table 1, connectivity issues, such as unstable networks and limited internet access, emerge as the most frequently reported obstacles, accounting for 18% and 12% respectively. In addition, low self-esteem (11%) and time constraints (10%) also present significant barriers.

Table 1 Thematic Analysis of Challenges Faced by Students in Evangelizing Through Digital Media

Theme	Subtheme	Obstacles
External challenges	Internet connection	Network Quota Electricity
	Communication tools	Device Gadget restrictions
	Social support	Advertisements Negative comments Lack of feedback
Internal challenges	Low self esteem	Fear Lack of confidence Lack of interest
	Time constraints	Lazy Busyness Time
	Limited knowledge about content creators	Lack of skills Technology illiteracy Content creation process Content ideas

The low rate of video content production for evangelism can be attributed to a combination of these factors, including limited internet access, insufficient digital devices, lack of peer support, low self-confidence, time limitations, and inadequate skills in content creation. Among these, low self-esteem appears to be particularly critical. When aggregated, the three elements under the self-esteem subtheme – fear, lack of confidence, and disinterest, constitute a notably high percentage. External influences, such as negative feedback, are closely linked to diminished confidence, with the fear of criticism often leading to procrastination and reduced motivation to produce evangelistic content. As a result, these barriers hinder theological engagement in the digital space.

Low self-esteem, therefore, emerges as a key issue that must be addressed within theological education. [Orth and Robins \(2014\)](#) emphasize that self-esteem has practical implications and is strongly connected to social interaction. In the Indonesian context, theology students are typically involved in formative processes such as spiritual development, discipleship, and character building. According to [Mary et al. \(2022\)](#), doctrinal courses in theological education contribute to the reformation of students' self-concept. However, this study found that many theology students continue to struggle with low self-esteem. To address this, efforts to strengthen students' self-concept must be optimized to help them build the confidence required to engage in theology within the digital realm.

Enhancing both academic and non-academic activities is essential to encouraging broader participation in digital evangelism. This is consistent with the findings of [Darmawan and Triastanti \(2020\)](#), who concluded that non-academic programs in theological education can positively influence students' self-concept. Addressing the issue of low self-esteem could therefore help reduce the barriers that prevent students from effectively communicating the Gospel via social media.

In conclusion, the study underscores that theology students face a combination of external and internal challenges in their efforts to engage in digital evangelism. To overcome these barriers, more effective strategies are needed—particularly those aimed at enhancing social support, building self-esteem, and improving students' digital literacy and content creation skills.

3.4 Students' Driving Forces in Communicating the Gospel Through Social Media

Several factors motivate students to share the Gospel through social media, including their desire to reach a broader audience and help more people come to know God, as guided by the Word of God ([Figure 7](#)). These driving factors are categorized into subthemes and themes that highlight the reasons behind their efforts to communicate the Gospel on digital platforms.

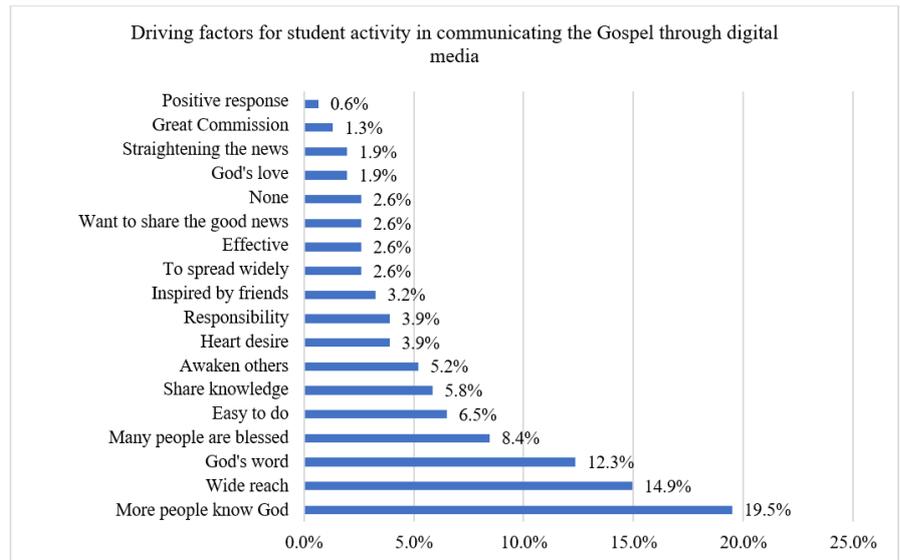


Figure 7 Driving Factors for Students in Communicating the Gospel Through Digital Media

The primary themes are categorized into two main areas: 1) External driving factors, which include four subthemes: sharing the good news, being a blessing, disseminating information, and social support; 2) Internal driving factors, which consist of two subthemes: God’s calling and serving as God’s servant. These factors are further detailed in [Table 2](#).

Table 2 Thematic analysis related to driving factors of student activity in communicating the Gospel through social media

Theme	Subtheme	Driving Factors
External driving factors	Sharing the Good News	More people know God
		Want to share the good news
	Being a Blessing	Many people are blessed
		Easy to do
Awaken others		
Disseminating Information	Get the word straight	
	Wide reach	
	Share knowledge	
Social Support	Spread widely	
	Effective	
Internal driving factors	Divine Calling	Positive response
		Inspired by friends
	Servanthood	Heart desire
		Responsibility
		Word of God
		God’s Love
		Great Commission

This analysis identifies various driving factors that influence theology students in their efforts to communicate the Gospel, categorized into two main themes: external and internal motivating factors. The external driving factors are divided into four subthemes:

- (1) Sharing the Good News: students aim to spread the message of God and the Gospel to increase awareness and understanding among others;
- (2) Being a Blessing: they seek to bless others through Gospel communication, often encouraged by social affirmation;
- (3) Disseminating Information: students strive to share Gospel-related content widely and effectively;
- (4) Social Support: positive responses and encouragement from peers serve as motivation to persist in their efforts.

The internal driving factors comprise two subthemes:

- (1) Divine Calling: students feel personally called by God to share the Gospel;

(2) Servanthood: they view Gospel communication as both a spiritual responsibility and a fulfillment of the Great Commission.

External factors, such as the broad reach of social media and the opportunity to introduce more people to God, emerge as particularly influential in motivating students to use digital media for Gospel communication. These external drivers are closely interrelated with internal motivations, such as personal conviction and obedience to the Great Commission. As stated in Matthew 28:18–20, Christians are commanded to “make disciples of all nations” (Darmawan et al., 2024). The desire to reach a wider audience through social media is reinforced by internal values like dedication, faith, and responsibility.

The findings also suggest that mobile phones can serve as tools for spiritual learning in broader and more accessible ways. Gospel communication in the digital space is largely driven by the opportunities social media provides to expand reach and influence. For many students, witnessing the positive impact of their online posts reinforces their engagement in digital theological discourse.

Overall, the analysis underscores the critical role of these driving factors in shaping students’ active participation in digital evangelism. The interaction between external and internal motivations significantly affects their enthusiasm and effectiveness in sharing the Gospel online. It is therefore essential for students to understand and reflect on these drivers in order to enhance both the impact and sustainability of their Gospel communication efforts.

3.5 Theological Implications and Contribution to Theological Studies

This research reveals that theology students in Indonesia actively use social media for communication and information sharing, including the dissemination of the Gospel. These findings highlight the potential of digital media as an effective tool for Gospel communication and for increasing public awareness of Christian teachings. The frequent use of platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook among theology students suggests that these social media channels hold considerable promise for the development of effective strategies in both theological education and digital evangelism. However, despite their active presence on social media, the study indicates that students make relatively limited use of these platforms to share biblical messages or devotional reflections. This points to an untapped potential for leveraging social media in more meaningful and impactful ways for Gospel communication.

The study contributes to the development of strategic approaches for the integration of social media into theological education. The findings emphasize that platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook are particularly effective in facilitating Gospel outreach. Moreover, the research provides valuable insights into how theology students in Indonesia engage with digital media, offering a basis for better understanding their online behavior and for informing improvements in digital communication strategies within theological contexts. Importantly, the findings also reveal that students have yet to produce content that incorporates biblical interpretation or deeper theological reflection. This further underscores the opportunity to support students in creating more theologically rich and contextually relevant content for use in digital evangelism.

3.6 The Use of Theological Digital Media with a Mobile Learning Framework

The study’s findings on the use of digital media by theology students for Gospel communication align well with established mobile learning frameworks (Cochrane et al., 2022; Okai-Ugbaje, Ardzejewska, & Imran, 2022). The research revealed that theology students maintain an average of five social media accounts, with WhatsApp (22.7%), Instagram (20.8%), and Facebook (20.2%) being the most frequently used platforms. This usage pattern reflects the mobile-enabled informal learning paradigm, where learning occurs through spontaneous, contextual interactions rather than within formal, structured environments (Meng & Li, 2024; Viberg et al., 2021).

The findings demonstrate the classic characteristics of mobile-supported informal learning (Han et al., 2020). Theology students engage in informal digital Gospel communication through everyday contextual experiences, such as sharing biblical content in their daily social media interactions. This practice exemplifies the situational and socially embedded nature of mobile learning (Viberg et al., 2021). Furthermore, their sharing behavior aligns with microlearning principles, as students tend to share brief biblical passages rather than comprehensive theological

reflections (Lopez, 2024).

The study reveals significant untapped potential to integrate microlearning theory into theological education. With 64.9% of students reporting that they share biblical content only 1–5 times per month, there appears to be readiness for a structured microlearning approach. Microlearning's emphasis on focused, bite-sized content delivery offers a promising strategy for deepening theological engagement in mobile learning contexts (McNeill & Fitch, 2023).

To operationalize theological learning via mobile devices, instructional design must emphasize context-based religious education, wherein students reflect on and share theological ideas in everyday digital interactions (Qu & Li, 2024; Kalogiannakis & Papadakis, 2020). Additionally, reflective practices should be incorporated into mobile learning platforms to foster self-assessment and critical thinking regarding the effectiveness of digital evangelism (Kalantarion et al., 2024; Zang & Shen, 2024).

The study also highlights connectivity issues and limited data plans as major external challenges (Papadakis et al., 2020). To address this, implementation strategies should include offline-enabled mobile learning, through the development of content that is accessible without constant internet connectivity (Amaaz et al., 2024; Okai-Ugbaje et al., 2022). Moreover, adopting data-efficient microlearning approaches can minimize data usage and enhance access for students with limited digital resources (Jubran, 2024).

These findings correspond with key theoretical models of mobile learning. For instance, activity theory emphasizes the interaction between individuals, tools (such as mobile devices), and the broader social context. In this regard, Naveed et al. (2023) demonstrate how students' social media use reflects dynamic engagements between personal goals, digital tools, and social expectations. Similarly, social cognitive theory suggests that students learn digital communication behaviors by observing others, imitating patterns, and responding to peer feedback. Jin et al. (2019) support this view, showing that peer encouragement plays a significant role in shaping students' online communication practices.

4 Research Limitations

This research involved a sample of 154 theology students from 20 theological institutions across Indonesia. The limited number of participants may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should include a broader and more diverse sample, particularly theology students from non-urban or remote areas, to ensure more representative results. Additionally, this study did not compare its findings with the specific learning outcomes outlined in the curricula of individual theological institutions, which may have provided further context and depth to the analysis.

The research focused exclusively on the three most frequently used social media platforms—WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook. While this focus highlights dominant trends, it may have influenced the results and does not offer a comprehensive view of students' broader social media usage.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the frequency with which students share God's Word or devotional content on social media remains relatively low. This may be attributed to factors such as limited digital content creation skills and time constraints, which hinder students from consistently engaging in online Gospel communication.

5 Conclusion

This research explores the use of digital media in Gospel communication among theology students in Indonesia. Employing a qualitative approach through interview techniques, data were collected from 154 theology students across several provinces. The findings indicate that students maintain an average of five social media accounts, with WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook being the most frequently used platforms. The results also suggest that technological advancements have significantly influenced students' behavior in utilizing social media, with most owning more than three accounts—facilitated by the ease of installing multiple applications on mobile devices.

In the context of Gospel communication, the study highlights that digital media offers valuable opportunities for information sharing and interpersonal engagement. It further reveals that theology students in Indonesia are active users of social media across diverse platforms. The research concludes that the use of digital media for Gospel communication is both meaning-

ful and effective. Digital technologies simplify the dissemination of information and foster communication, while allowing users to manage multiple platforms efficiently. Therefore, the development of effective strategies for social media utilization is essential to fully realize the potential of digital media in theological education and Gospel outreach.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

References

- Amaaz, A., Mouradi, A., & Erradi, M. (2024). A Model for Physics Practical Work Using Mobile Learning and Learning Management System (LMS) In Higher Education: Design, Validation, and Evaluation. *Journal of Baltic Science Education*, 23(5), 809–825.
<https://doi.org/10.33225/jbse/24.23.809>
- Aripardono, H. W. (2020). Penerapan Komunikasi Digital Storytelling Pada Media Sosial Instagram. *Teknika*, 9(2), 121–128.
<https://doi.org/10.34148/teknika.v9i2.298>
- Badri, M. (2022). Pribumi Digital Moderat: Profil Kecakapan Komunikasi Digital Generasi Z. *Jurnal Riset Komunikasi*, 5(2), 291–303.
<https://doi.org/10.38194/jurkom.v5i2.653>
- Bawono, H. (2020). Risk Detection in Digital Information Management: A Records Management Perspective. *Khazanah Al-Hikmah: Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan, Informasi Dan Kearsipan*, 8(2), 251–267.
<https://doi.org/10.24252/kah.v8cf3>
- Chatterjee, S., & Yadav, S. (2022). The Coevolution of Biomolecules and Prebiotic Information Systems in the Origin of Life: A Visualization Model for Assembling the First Gene. *Life*, 12(6), 834.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/life12060834>
- Cochrane, T. D., Narayan, V., Aiello, S., Alizadeh, M., Birt, J., Bone, E., Cowie, N., Cowling, M., Deneen, C., Goldacre, P., Sinfield, D., Stretton, T., & Worthington, T. (2022). Analysing mobile learning designs: A framework for transforming learning post-COVID. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 38(4), 1–21.
<https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.7997>
- Darmawan, I. P. A., Tanhidy, J., & Doma, Y. (2024). Youth key persons' digital discipleship process during the pandemic and post-pandemic era. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 80(1).
<https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9673>
- Darmawan, I. P. A., & Triastanti, D. (2020). Pola Perwalian Sebagai Pembinaan Akademik, Kerohanian dan Karakter Mahasiswa. *Jurnal Ilmiah Religiosity Entity Humanity (JIREH)*, 2(1), 13–26.
<https://doi.org/10.37364/jireh.v2i1.32>
- Diana, R. (2019). Peran Komunikator Kristen Dalam Strategi Pekabaran Injil Di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0. *Integritas: Jurnal Teologi*, 1(1), 66–73.
<https://doi.org/10.47628/jt.v1i1.3>
- Diana, R., Saptorini, S., Darmawan, I. P. A., Objantoro, E., & Katarina. (2023). Digital Media Usage for Christian Discipleship in Technological Disruption Era. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Theology, Humanities and Christian Education 2022 (ICONTHCE 2022)*, 216–223.
https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-160-9_24
- Fröh, J., & Robinson, M. R. (2023). Digital Religious Communication and the Facilitation of Social Resilience, Part 2: Empirical Test of the Theoretical Model. A Study of the Twitter Activity of Ecumenical and Social Justice-Oriented Groups during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Religious & Theological Information*, 23(1–2), 28–46.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10477845.2023.2233875>
- GP, H. (2012). Komunikasi Dalam Pemberitaan Injil: Membangun dan Mengembangkan Komunikasi Injil dalam Pelaksanaan Amanat Agung. Penerbit Andi.
- Han, Y., Yang, F., Xiong, S., & Hu, M. (2020). Informal learning research based on mobile portable devices. *2020 International Conference on Information Science and Education (ICISE-IE)*, 334–337.
<https://doi.org/10.1109/icise51755.2020.00080>
- Jin, B., Kim, J., & Baumgartner, L. M. (2019). Informal Learning of Older Adults in Using Mobile Devices: A Review of the Literature. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 69(2), 120–141.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713619834726>
- Jubran, S. M. (2024). An Instructional Model Based on Mobile Microlearning for Teaching English Idioms Through Songs to EFL Learners. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 14(4), 1105–1111.
<https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1404.18>
- Kalantarian, M., Ahmady, S., Kallestrup, P., Katibeh, M., Sadoughi, M. M., Khajeali, N., & Faghihi, S. A. (2024). How to create a successful mobile learning strategy for medical education during lockdowns? *Journal of Education and Health Promotion*, 13(1).
https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp.167_23

- Kalogiannakis, M., & Papadakis, S. (2020). The Use of Developmentally Mobile Applications for Preparing Pre-Service Teachers to Promote STEM Activities in Preschool Classrooms. *Mobile Learning Applications in Early Childhood Education*, 82–100.
<https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-1486-3.ch005>
- Karakose, T., Tülübaş, T., & Papadakis, S. (2022). Revealing the Intellectual Structure and Evolution of Digital Addiction Research: An Integrated Bibliometric and Science Mapping Approach. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(22), 14883.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192214883>
- Larencia, F. (2022). Peranan Ilmu Komunikasi dan Penerapannya dalam Pelaksanaan Pekabaran Injil di Ladang. *GENEVA: Jurnal Teologi Dan Misi*, 4(1), 59.
- Limilia, P., Gelgel, R. A., & Rahmaji, L. R. (2022). Digital Literacy Among Z Generation in Indonesia. *European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 1–11.
<https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2022.01.02.1>
- Lopez, S. (2024). Impact of Cognitive Load Theory on the Effectiveness of Microlearning Modules. *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 5(2), 29–35.
<https://doi.org/10.24018/ejedu.2024.5.2.799>
- Mary, E., Uda, S., & Darmawan, I. P. A. (2022). Theological knowledge internalization in man and sin doctrine learning. *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation (IJHI)*, 5(1), 1–7.
<https://doi.org/10.33750/ijhi.v5i1.130>
- McNeill, L., & Fitch, D. (2022). Microlearning through the Lens of Gagne’s Nine Events of Instruction: A Qualitative Study. *TechTrends*, 67(3), 521–533.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-022-00805-x>
- Meng, Z., & Li, R. (2023). Understanding Chinese teachers’ informal online learning continuance in a mobile learning community: an intrinsic–extrinsic motivation perspective. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 36(2), 275–297.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-023-09352-7>
- Missa, R. (2021). Penggunaan Teknologi Komunikasi Digital Sebagai Tawaran Sarana Pelayanan Pastoral Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19. *Atma Rekha: Jurnal Pastoral Dan Kateketik*, 5(1), 36.
<https://doi.org/10.53949/ar.v5i1.56>
- Munandar, H., & Suherman, M. (2016). Aktivitas Komunikasi Pemerintahan Ridwan Kamil di Media sosial. *Jurnal Hubungan Masyarakat*, 2(1), 423–430.
- Naveed, Q. N., Choudhary, H., Ahmad, N., Alqahtani, J., & Qahmash, A. I. (2023). Mobile Learning in Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review. *Sustainability*, 15(18), 13566.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su151813566>
- Nggebu, S., Buyung, Y. F. M., & Wood, A. (2023). Theological Perspectives on Responses to Prayer Requests in WhatsApp Groups. *Evangelikal: Jurnal Teologi Injili Dan Pembinaan Warga Jemaat*, 7(2), 164.
<https://doi.org/10.46445/ejti.v7i2.663>
- Okai-Ugbaje, S., Ardzejewska, K., & Imran, A. (2022). A mobile learning framework for higher education in resource constrained environments. *Education and Information Technologies*, 27(8), 11947–11969.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-022-11094-5>
- Orth, U., & Robins, R. W. (2014). The Development of Self-Esteem. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23(5), 381–387.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721414547414>
- Papadakis, S., Trampas, A., Barios, A., Kalogiannakis, M., & Vidakis, N. (2020). Evaluating the Learning Process: The “ThimelEdu” Educational Game Case Study. *Proceedings of the 12th International Conference on Computer Supported Education*.
<https://doi.org/10.5220/0009379902900298>
- Papadakis, S., Kiv, A. E., Kravtsov, H. M., Osadchyi, V. V., Marienko, M. V., Pinchuk, O. P., Shyshkina, M. P., Sokolyuk, O. M., Mintii, I. S., Vakaliuk, T. A., Azarova, L. E., Kolgatina, L. S., Amelina, S. M., Volkova, N. P., Velychko, V. Ye., Striuk, A. M., & Semerikov, S. O. (2023). *ACNS Conference on Cloud and Immersive Technologies in Education: Report. CTE Workshop Proceedings*, 10, 1–44.
<https://doi.org/10.55056/cte.544>
- Papadakis, S., Kiv, A. E., Kravtsov, H. M., Osadchyi, V. V., Marienko, M. V., Pinchuk, O. P., ... & Striuk, A. M. (2023b). Unlocking the power of synergy: the joint force of cloud technologies and augmented reality in education. In Joint Proceedings of the 10th Workshop on Cloud Technologies in Education (CTE 2021) and 5th International Workshop on Augmented Reality in Education (AREdu 2022), Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine, May 23, 2022. *CEUR Workshop Proceedings*.
- Pasasa, A. (2015). Pemanfaatan media internet sebagai media pemberitaan injil. *Jurnal Simpson*, II, 71–98.
- Et. al., C. P. (2021). Distance Learning In Primary Schools During The Covid-19 Pandemic In Indonesia: Challenges, Solutions, And Projections. *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education (TURCOMAT)*, 12(4), 263–270.
<https://doi.org/10.17762/turcomat.v12i4.502>
- Qu, L., & Li, L. (2024). Implementation Strategy of Project-Based Learning in Mobile Learning Environments and Its Effects. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies (IJIM)*, 18(22), 4–18.
<https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v18i22.52449>

- Ronda, D. (2016). Pemimpin dan Media: Misi Pemimpin Membawa Injil Melalui Dunia Digital. *Jurnal Jaffray*, 14(2), 189.
<https://doi.org/10.25278/jj71.v14i2.210>
- Rossi, N. A., French, K. R., Evans, C. L., Ohlstein, J. F., Neve, L. D., Daram, S., Young, D. L., McKinnon, B. J., & Pine, H. S. (2022). Trending Tubes: A Social Media Analysis of Tympanostomy Tubes in Children. *OTO Open*, 6(1). Portico.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2473974x221086964>
- Sari, A. C., Hartina, R., Awalia, R., Irianti, H., & Ainun, N. (2018). *Komunikasi dan Media Sosial. Jurnal The Messenger*, 3(2), 69.
- Siregar, H. (2022). Analisis Pemanfaatan Media Sosial Sebagai Sarana Sosialisasi Pancasila. *Pancasila: Jurnal Keindonesiaan*, 71–82.
<https://doi.org/10.52738/pjk.v2i1.102>
- Sitompul, L. J. (2020). Persepsi Pemuda Tentang Pola Pelayanan Penatua Dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Beribadah di GKPI Sigompulon Pahae Julu Tahun 2019. *Areopagus: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Teologi Kristen*, 18(1), 155–167.
<https://doi.org/10.46965/ja.v18i1.81>
- Sugiono, S. (2021). Tantangan dan Peluang Pemanfaatan Augmented Reality di Perangkat Mobile dalam Komunikasi Pemasaran. *Jurnal Komunika: Jurnal Komunikasi, Media Dan Informatika*, 10(1), 1.
<https://doi.org/10.31504/komunika.v10i1.3715>
- Szeto, M. D., Mamo, A., Afrin, A., Militello, M., & Barber, C. (2021). Social Media in Dermatology and an Overview of Popular Social Media Platforms. *Current Dermatology Reports*, 10(4), 97–104.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13671-021-00343-4>
- Telaumbanua, A., & Butarbutar, R. D. (2022). Misi Pendidikan Agama Kristen Berbasis Digital di Tengah Masyarakat Plural. *CHARISTHEO: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen*, 2(1), 86–99.
<https://doi.org/10.54592/jct.v2i1.69>
- Tülübaş, T., Karakose, T., & Papadakis, S. (2023). A Holistic Investigation of the Relationship between Digital Addiction and Academic Achievement among Students. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 13(10), 2006–2034.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/ejihpe13100143>
- Turnip, E. Y., & Siahaan, C. (2021). Etika Berkomunikasi dalam Era Media Digital. *Jurnal Ekonomi, Sosial & Humaniora*, 3(4), 1–8.
- Utama, A. K. P., Katarso, D., & Saptorini, S. (2022). Media Digital dalam Pemuridan Generasi Muda Kristen di Era Industri 4.0. *MAGNUM OPUS: Jurnal Teologi Dan Kepemimpinan Kristen*, 3(2).
<https://doi.org/10.52220/magnum.v3i2.143>
- Viberg, O., Andersson, A., & Wiklund, M. (2018). Designing for sustainable mobile learning re-evaluating the concepts “formal” and “informal.” *Interactive Learning Environments*, 29(1), 130–141.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2018.1548488>
- Vițelar, A. (2019). Like Me: Generation Z and the Use of Social Media for Personal Branding. *Management Dynamics in the Knowledge Economy*, 7(2), 257–268.
<https://doi.org/10.25019/mdke/7.2.07>
- Zahid, A. (2019). Sensualitas Media Sosial di Era Globalisasi (Kajian Sosiologi Media McLuhan sebagai Analisis Media Masa Kini). *Jurnal Sosiologi USK (Media Pemikiran & Aplikasi)*, 13(1), 1–15.
<https://doi.org/10.24815/jsu.v13i1.13030>
- Zaluchu, S. E. (2022). Church Digitalization and the New Koinonia in the Era of the “Internet of Things.” *International Bulletin of Mission Research*, 47(1), 32–40.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/23969393221082641>
- Zaluchu, S., Engel, J., Pilakoannu, R., & Zaluchu, F. (2023). Digital Discipleship in Digital Religion Perspective. *International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society*, 14(2), 27–40.
<https://doi.org/10.18848/2154-8633/cgp/v14i02/27-40>
- Zang, S., & Shen, X. (2024). Impact of Mobile Learning on Self-Regulated Learning Abilities of Higher Education Students. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies (IJIM)*, 18(14), 177–194.
<https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v18i14.50273>