

## Technology-Integrated Catechism Curriculum: A Systematic Literature Review on Strengthening Youth Faith and Preventing Juvenile Delinquency

Rependi Sianturi<sup>1</sup>, Darul Ilmi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Kristen Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>UIN Sjech M. Djamil Djambek Bukittinggi, Bukittinggi, Indonesia

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### Abstract

This study addresses the increasing problem of juvenile delinquency among Indonesian youth, including church adolescents, by examining the need for a more relevant and transformative catechism curriculum. The research employs a qualitative systematic literature review of peer-reviewed articles on catechesis, Christian religious education, youth faith formation, and juvenile delinquency. The inclusion criteria covered publications from 2021 to 2025 in English and Indonesian; however, all selected studies were published between 2023 and 2025 due to their stronger relevance and methodological suitability. The findings indicate that effective catechism curricula must adopt a holistic, contextual, and participatory approach integrating theological perspectives, adolescent developmental psychology, and character education. In addition, this study highlights that the integration of educational technology—such as digital media, e-learning platforms, and interactive applications—is a critical component in enhancing engagement, accessibility, and learning effectiveness among digital-native youth. The proposed curriculum framework emphasizes contextual theological content, student-centered learning strategies, experiential spiritual practices, and sustainable mentoring supported by collaboration among church, family, and educational institutions. This study contributes theoretically by integrating faith formation and educational technology within a unified framework and practically by offering a technology-integrated catechism curriculum model to strengthen youth faith and moral resilience in addressing juvenile delinquency.

### Keywords:

Youth Confirmation Catechesis, Church Curriculum Development, Adolescent Faith Formation, Juvenile Delinquency Prevention, Christian Religious Education

(\*) Corresponding Author: [suakn@yahoo.co.id](mailto:suakn@yahoo.co.id)

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## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of juvenile delinquency in Indonesia has significantly increased over the past decade, encompassing various forms of deviant behavior such as drug abuse, promiscuity, brawls, and youth criminality that threaten the future of the nation's young generation (Jasmisari & Sekarningrum, 2024; Saragih et al., 2025). Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission indicate a drastic rise in juvenile delinquency cases, driven by factors such as identity crises, peer pressure, and the lack of adequate spiritual guidance (Astari & Joseph, 2023; Juliana, 2025). In the Christian context, church youth face similar challenges as



they struggle to maintain their faith values amidst modern pressures that often conflict with religious principles (Margareth & Sitorus, 2025). This situation demands that the church take a proactive role in shaping character and strengthening the spiritual foundation of youth through structured and sustainable discipleship programs.

Catechism for confirmation (katekisasi sisi) is a vital instrument within the Protestant church tradition to prepare youth for spiritual maturity through public confession of faith (Prayitno & Tacain, 2023). This program serves as a systematic learning process about doctrine, Christian ethics, and responsibilities as mature church members (Canales, 2020; Sihombing, 2023). However, the implementation of catechism curricula in many churches still faces substantial challenges related to material relevance, conventional teaching methods, and a lack of alignment between instructional content and the real needs of youth in addressing contemporary issues (Chomba Mubanga, 2015). Current curricula tend to be doctrinaire and theoretical, without integrating practical aspects that help youth apply faith values in daily life, particularly in situations that may lead them toward deviant behavior (Null, 2023). This gap creates a disconnect between the ideal goals of catechism and its real impact on building moral and spiritual resilience among youth.

In the era of digital transformation, educational technology plays a crucial role in shaping learning experiences among adolescents (Dwistia et al., 2024; Palacios-Rodríguez et al., 2023; Timotheou et al., 2023). The use of digital media, e-learning platforms, and interactive applications has been proven to increase engagement, accessibility, and effectiveness of learning processes (Bajaj, 2024; Rafiq et al., 2024). However, the integration of educational technology in catechism and church-based learning remains limited, creating a gap between traditional faith formation methods and the digital learning preferences of today's youth (Omoasegun, 2025; R. Siahaan, 2025; Tarihoran & Firmato, 2024).

Previous studies have explored various dimensions of youth formation and juvenile delinquency from multiple perspectives. Research by (Kaligis & Tewu, 2025) identified that effective faith formation requires a holistic approach integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in the learning process. Meanwhile, (Purba, 2021) emphasized the importance of contextualizing catechism materials with the social realities of youth to ensure teaching relevance. Furthermore, (Rendi et al., 2024) found that participatory learning methods in religious education are more effective in enhancing value internalization than traditional lecturing methods. However, these studies have not specifically examined how catechism curricula can be comprehensively designed and developed to address juvenile delinquency while simultaneously considering theological, psychological, and sociological dimensions.

The identified research gap shows that there has been no in-depth study specifically developing a catechism curriculum model aimed at strengthening faith while preventing juvenile delinquency through a systematic and measurable approach. Previous studies have generally discussed partial aspects such as teaching methods, theological content, or delinquency factors separately, without integrating them into a unified curriculum framework (Tampenawas & Selanno, 2025). Moreover, the lack of research using research and development approaches in the context of catechism curriculum design indicates vast opportunities for exploration in this field. This study seeks to fill that gap by developing a catechism curriculum

that not only emphasizes doctrinal aspects but also integrates strategies for character formation, life skills, and self-defense mechanisms for youth against various forms of temptation and negative environmental influences (Karl & Malelak, 2022).

The novelty of this research lies in developing a comprehensive and integrative catechism curriculum by combining the Reformed theological approach, adolescent developmental psychology, and character education theory into a coherent and applicable framework. The developed curriculum focuses not only on doctrinal knowledge transfer but also on fostering spiritual resilience and ethical decision-making skills in the dilemmas youth often face (Meruntu, 2025). In addition, this research integrates a contextual learning approach that enables youth to explore and reflect on their faith within the context of real challenges such as peer pressure, social media exposure, and value conflicts in everyday life. Another innovation offered is the development of an evaluation instrument that assesses not only cognitive aspects but also attitudinal and behavioral transformation among youth after participating in the catechism program (Awang et al., 2021).

Based on the above, the research questions are: How can a catechism curriculum be effectively developed to strengthen faith and prepare church youth to face the challenges of juvenile delinquency? What essential components should be integrated into the curriculum? And how effective is the implementation of the developed curriculum in producing changes in youth knowledge, attitudes, and behavior? The objectives of this research are to develop a comprehensive catechism curriculum model, test its validity and reliability, and analyze the effectiveness of its implementation in strengthening faith and moral resilience among church youth. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Christian religious education theory, particularly in the areas of catechism and youth formation, while practically, it provides guidance for churches to implement more relevant and effective catechism programs and serves as a reference for future researchers in developing contextual and transformative models of youth spiritual formation.

## METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research approach based on literature analysis, specifically using a systematic literature review design. Therefore, this research is not categorized as Research and Development (R&D), but rather as literature-based research aimed at conceptual synthesis and theoretical model development (Sugiyono, 2024).

The purpose of this approach is to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize findings from relevant scholarly works related to catechism curriculum development, youth faith formation, and juvenile delinquency prevention. Through this method, the study seeks to construct a conceptual and integrative curriculum framework grounded in existing empirical and theoretical studies.

The systematic literature review allows for a structured and transparent process in identifying, selecting, and interpreting prior research, enabling the researcher to map the state of the art, identify research gaps, and formulate a theoretically grounded curriculum model (Soaita et al., 2020).

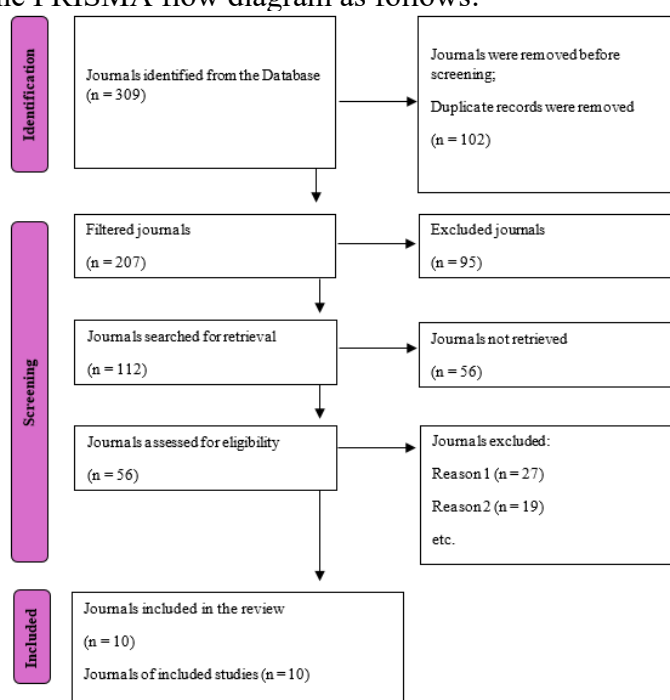
The keywords used in the literature search included Indonesian terms such as *“kurikulum katekisasi”*, *“sidi remaja”*, *“kenakalan remaja”*, *“pendidikan agama Kristen”*, *“pembinaan iman remaja”*, and *“pengembangan kurikulum*

*gereja*". The English keywords used were "confirmation curriculum", "youth catechism", "adolescent delinquency", "Christian religious education", "faith formation", and "church curriculum development". In addition, this study also analyzes literature related to the use of educational technology in religious education and youth learning environments.

The inclusion criteria established for this study consisted of: (1) journal articles published between 2021 and 2025 to ensure relevance and data currency; (2) articles discussing topics related to youth catechism, Christian religious education, juvenile delinquency, or church curriculum development; (3) publications written in either Indonesian or English; and (4) articles available in full-text form.

The exclusion criteria included: (1) articles irrelevant to the research focus despite containing the searched keywords; (2) non-peer-reviewed publications such as opinion pieces or popular articles; (3) duplicate publications from the same study; and (4) articles lacking a clear methodology or conceptual framework.

The literature selection process followed a systematic procedure and is illustrated in the PRISMA flow diagram as follows:



**Figure 1.** PRISMA Flowchart

Based on a rigorous selection process, a total of 309 journals were initially identified through database searches. Of these, 102 articles were eliminated due to duplication, leaving 207 journals for further screening. From this number, 95 articles were excluded after title and abstract screening because they did not meet the topic relevance criteria. Subsequently, 112 journals were retained for full-text review; however, 56 articles could not be accessed due to full-text unavailability or other technical limitations.

Among the 56 journals that were fully reviewed and assessed for eligibility, 27 articles were excluded for not meeting the established methodological criteria, 19 articles were excluded for lacking substantial data or findings, and several others were removed due to additional methodological and substantive reasons.

Ultimately, 10 high-quality journals that fully met all inclusion and exclusion criteria were selected as the main sources for this literature review and served as the primary basis for in-depth analysis to address the formulated research questions.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Based on the systematic selection process conducted on scholarly literature related to the development of the catechism curriculum, youth faith formation, and the prevention of juvenile delinquency, this study successfully identified ten high-quality journals that met the established inclusion and exclusion criteria. These ten journals were published between 2023 and 2025, reflecting the latest developments in the fields of Christian religious education and church youth formation.

An in-depth analysis of these journals revealed several key dimensions relevant to the research focus, including aspects of youth participation in church life, the effectiveness of discipleship and catechism programs, challenges in Christian religious education curriculum design, the role of educators in addressing juvenile delinquency, and strategies for preventing delinquent behavior through church-based mentoring programs.

Findings from the reviewed studies consistently emphasize the importance of holistic, contextual, and participatory approaches in the process of youth faith formation, as well as the need for curricular innovation that effectively responds to the contemporary challenges faced by the younger generation.

The following table presents a comprehensive synthesis of the ten reviewed journals, including information on the authors, year of publication, research focus, methodology used, main findings, and each study's relevance to the development of the catechism curriculum aimed at strengthening faith and preparing youth to confront juvenile delinquency.

**Table 1.** Synthesis of Journal Findings

| No. | Author and Year              | Research Focus  | Method   | Key Findings  | Relevance to Title   |
|-----|------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| 1   | (Betu, 2023)                 | Participation of Catholic youth in church life as an effort to grow faith | Qualitative with interview techniques and literature studies on 7 active OMK respondents | 85.7% of respondents found that youth activities had an impact on self-transformation and faith growth through service, prayer, and spiritual activities. | Demonstrates the importance of structured programs in shaping the spiritual transformation of adolescents through active participation in faith communities. |
| 2   | (G. Siahaan & Nababan, 2024) | The development and growth of youth faith after                           | Qualitative with in-depth interviews and participant observation                         | A discipleship program with structured materials increases  | Provides empirical evidence that systematic discipleship   |

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|   |                           | discipleship at GPP Siaro  | for two months  | theological understanding, deepens the relationship with Jesus, and strengthens faith commitment and participation in ministry.                                       | programs with relevant theological content are effective in increasing the spiritual resilience of adolescents.   |
| 3 | (Pasaribu, 2024)          | Problems of PAK curriculum design on interest in learning catechism at HKBP Habinsaran | Qualitative involves teachers, participants, parents, elders with analysis of teaching materials and learning methods | The need for curriculum renewal through the use of technology, interactive methods, and the role of parents in increasing interest in learning catechism              | Identifying gaps in conventional catechism curricula and the urgency of pedagogical innovation to increase the relevance of learning                    |
| 4 | (Kambuaya, 2024)          | The role of PAK teachers in dealing with juvenile delinquency problems                 | Qualitative with data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing analysis techniques            | Juvenile delinquency is caused by environmental and family factors; the role of PAK teachers as motivators, educators, and advisors is not yet optimal but strategic. | Emphasizing the importance of religious educators as agents of change in shaping character and preventing deviant behavior in adolescents.              |
| 5 | (Mega, 2024)              | Efforts to overcome juvenile delinquency at the GMT Efata Liliba Congregation          | Descriptive qualitative with interviews and observations of 2 teenagers using Miles and Huberman analysis             | Efforts through worship, guidance, socialization, and catechism have not been optimal; teenagers are still involved in fights, drunkenness, and gambling.             | Revealing the gap between existing coaching programs and the effectiveness of delinquency prevention, indicating the need for a comprehensive strategy. |
| 6 | (Hutagalung et al., 2024) | The relationship   | Quantitative descriptive  | There is a significant  | Demonstrating a positive  |

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|   |                            | between adolescent worship practices and the growth of faith at GKO Pematang Tembesu                | inferential with observation, interviews, questionnaires on 30 teenagers               | positive relationship (r=0.666) between worship procedures and faith growth of 44.3%; increasing the quality of worship increases the resilience of faith.             | correlation between structured worship practices and strengthening faith, supporting the integration of the liturgical dimension into the curriculum. |
| 7 | (Messakh & Hasibuan, 2023) | PAK learning design for adolescents aged 12-16 years using Subject Centered Design                  | Literature study to develop contextual learning models                                 | The Subject Centered Design approach increases the interest and active participation of adolescents through lecture, discussion, inquiry, and problem solving methods. | Offers a pedagogical framework that positions adolescents as active subjects of learning, relevant for participatory curriculum development.          |
| 8 | (Nggiri et al., 2024)      | The effectiveness of PAK in shaping the intellectual, spiritual and moral growth of students' faith | Literature study of books, journal articles, and relevant research results             | The effectiveness of PAK is enhanced through contextual curriculum, interactive methods, and tripartite school-family-church collaboration.                            | Underlines a holistic approach that integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions in comprehensive faith formation                      |
| 9 | (Harefa, 2025)             | PAK education for GKSI Sengkuang youth in overcoming identity crisis                                | Qualitative with direct observation and literature analysis of journals, books, Bibles | Integrated PAK helps teenagers understand their identity in Christ, raises awareness of the dangers of identity crises and the   | Demonstrates the relevance of PAK in forming a strong spiritual identity as protection against negative influences and existential                    |

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|----|-----------------|--|---|--|---|
| 10 | (Poncini, 2024) | Empowering religious educators in Catholic schools through the RECALL approach | Research based on educational standards with inquiry-based and standards-based principles | importance of community. The RECALL approach builds religious literacy, deepens awareness of faith traditions, and improves the quality of learning through three guiding questions. | crises in adolescents. Provides a theoretical framework for developing the competence of catechism educators in delivering doctrinal content in a meaningful and applicable manner. |
|----|-----------------|--|---|--|---|

A comprehensive analysis of the ten reviewed journals revealed several significant findings that provide a strong foundation for developing an effective catechism curriculum aimed at strengthening faith and preparing youth to face juvenile delinquency.

First, all studies show a consensus on the importance of a holistic approach that integrates intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions in youth faith formation. This aligns with the need for comprehensive character development that serves as a strong defense against various temptations and negative pressures.

Second, the effectiveness of catechism and discipleship programs largely depends on the relevance of their content to the contemporary lives of young people. Curricula that are purely doctrinal and theoretical, without practical application, have been shown to produce limited transformation in youth attitudes and behavior.

Third, participatory, interactive, and student-centered learning methods are proven to be more effective in increasing interest, engagement, and value internalization compared to conventional, lecture-based approaches that are passive in nature.

Fourth, tripartite collaboration between the church, family, and educational institutions is identified as a crucial factor in the success of youth faith formation programs, as character development requires consistent values and continuous mentoring from all parties involved in the lives of young people.

Fifth, previous studies identify peer environment and family conditions as the main causes of juvenile delinquency. Therefore, the catechism curriculum should incorporate strategies for developing spiritual resilience and ethical decision-making skills to equip youth in facing peer pressure and moral dilemmas.

Sixth, the integration of educational technology such as digital media, mobile learning applications, and online platforms is identified as a strategic approach to increase youth engagement in catechism learning. Technology-based learning enables interactive, flexible, and contextual learning experiences that align with the digital habits of contemporary adolescents.

## **Discussion**

### **Development of an Effective Catechism Curriculum Model for Strengthening Youth Faith**

The development of an effective catechism curriculum for confirmation (sidi) aimed at strengthening faith and preparing youth to face juvenile delinquency requires a systematic approach that integrates principles of instructional design with the spiritual and psychological needs of contemporary adolescents. Based on the literature analysis, an appropriate curriculum development model should begin with a comprehensive needs analysis of the actual challenges faced by youth, including identifying causal factors of delinquency such as peer pressure, identity crises, social media influence, and inadequate spiritual guidance (Harefa, 2025). The next stage involves formulating learning objectives that go beyond doctrinal mastery to include character transformation, spiritual resilience, and the ability to apply faith values in real-life situations. According to (Messakh & Hasibuan, 2023), the main problem of conventional catechism curricula lies in the lack of relevance between the teaching material and the social reality of youth. Therefore, a new curriculum must ensure content contextualization that allows youth to see the direct relationship between faith teachings and their life struggles. The model should adopt a learner-centered approach, positioning youth as active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of monologic knowledge transfer.

### **Essential Components to Be Integrated into the Catechism Curriculum**

The first essential component of the catechism curriculum is a comprehensive yet contextual theological content, covering an in-depth understanding of Reformed doctrine, church history, confession of faith, sacraments, and Christian ethics—integrated with a discussion of identity in Christ as the foundation of spiritual resilience (Poncini, 2024). This content should not be presented in a rigid catechism format focused on memorization alone, but rather through dialogical exploration that allows youth to question, reflect on, and internalize faith truths personally.

The second component is a participatory and interactive pedagogical approach utilizing various learning methods such as group discussions, case studies, problem-based learning, role-playing, and experiential reflection. These methods allow youth to explore the practical application of faith values when facing moral dilemmas and challenging situations (G. Siahaan & Nababan, 2024). Studies show that active learner participation leads to more effective value internalization compared to traditional lecturing approaches, which tend to produce only superficial cognitive understanding without behavioral transformation.

The third component is the integration of spiritual-liturgical dimensions that strengthen faith experiences through structured worship, contemplative prayer, adoration, spiritual retreats, and social service activities. These practices provide opportunities for youth to encounter God personally and to express their faith through concrete actions (Betu, 2023). (Pasaribu, 2024) demonstrated through quantitative research that there is a significant positive correlation (44.3%) between the quality of liturgical worship and youth faith growth, indicating that experiential learning within liturgical contexts has a profound impact on spiritual depth that cannot be replaced by cognitive learning alone.

The fourth component is character formation and spiritual resilience, equipping youth with the ability to maintain moral integrity when facing temptations, negative pressures, and value conflicts. This includes developing ethical decision-making skills based on Christian principles, emotional management, and strategies for coping with peer pressure (Nggiri et al., 2024).

The fifth component is the establishment of a sustainable pastoral mentoring mechanism involving tripartite collaboration between catechists, parents, and the church community to consistently support youth faith growth through mentoring programs, counseling, pastoral visits, and the formation of small groups that serve as peer support systems grounded in Christian values.

### **Effectiveness of Curriculum Implementation in Producing Cognitive, Affective, and Psychomotor Changes in Youth**

The effectiveness of the catechism curriculum implementation in generating cognitive changes among youth can be measured by improvements in theological understanding, the ability to articulate confessions of faith, and mastery of Christian ethical principles as the foundation for moral decision-making. (Mega, 2024) found that structured discipleship programs significantly increased participants' theological understanding, reflected in their ability to explain fundamental faith concepts and their growing interest in exploring Christian teachings further.

However, cognitive transformation alone is insufficient without accompanying changes in the affective dimension, which involves deepening one's personal relationship with Jesus, developing intrinsic motivation to live according to faith values, and cultivating a positive attitude toward worship and service. (Tunggal et al., 2024) reported that 85.7% of participants in youth formation programs experienced attitudinal transformation, reflected in greater intimacy with God, awareness of their identity as children of God, and commitment to serve others as an expression of living faith.

The psychomotor dimension, which manifests through observable behavioral changes, serves as the most crucial indicator of the catechism curriculum's effectiveness. This includes increased participation in church activities, consistency in personal devotion practices, engagement in social service, and, most importantly, the manifestation of Christian character in daily life—particularly in the ability to resist temptations that lead to delinquent behavior (Kambuaya, 2024).

Although various youth formation efforts such as youth services, catechism classes, and awareness programs have been conducted, their effectiveness in preventing juvenile delinquency remains suboptimal, as instances of fighting, alcohol abuse, and gambling among youth still occur. These findings indicate that curriculum effectiveness depends heavily on implementation quality, including program consistency, catechist competence in facilitating transformative learning, systemic support from families and church communities, and the intensity of pastoral mentoring to ensure continuous faith development.

Enhancing the capacity of religious educators through research-led approaches that foster religious literacy and deepen awareness of faith traditions is a fundamental prerequisite for effectively transmitting Christian values to the younger generation. The quality of faith learning is determined by educators' ability to present doctrinal content meaningfully, contextually, and transformatively.

### **Integration of Educational Technology in Catechism Curriculum**

The integration of educational technology into catechism curriculum design is essential to ensure its relevance in the digital era. Adolescents today are digital natives who are highly engaged with technology in their daily lives. Therefore, catechism learning must adapt by incorporating digital media such as video-based learning, interactive mobile applications, gamification, and online discussion platforms.

The use of Learning Management Systems (LMS), such as Google Classroom or Moodle, can facilitate structured learning, assignment submission, and continuous interaction between catechists and learners. In addition, social media platforms can be utilized as tools for faith-sharing, reflection, and community building among youth.

Technology also enables personalized and self-paced learning, allowing adolescents to explore faith materials according to their individual needs and learning styles. This approach not only increases engagement but also strengthens the internalization of values through experiential and interactive learning processes.

Therefore, the integration of educational technology is not merely a supporting element but becomes a core component in developing a transformative and effective catechism curriculum in the contemporary context.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that the development of a technology-integrated catechism curriculum is essential to strengthen youth faith and effectively address the challenges of juvenile delinquency in the contemporary digital era. A holistic and integrative approach that combines theological, pedagogical, psychological, and technological dimensions is required to ensure the relevance and transformative impact of catechism learning for today's adolescents.

The findings from the systematic literature review reveal several key points. First, effective youth faith formation must adopt a holistic approach that integrates cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Second, curriculum relevance to the real-life context of adolescents significantly influences learning effectiveness and value internalization. Third, participatory and student-centered learning methods are more effective than traditional approaches in fostering engagement and transformation. Fourth, collaboration between church, family, and educational institutions plays a crucial role in supporting sustainable faith development. Fifth, the integration of educational technology—such as digital media, e-learning platforms, and interactive applications—enhances engagement, accessibility, and learning effectiveness among digital-native youth.

Practically, this study implies that churches need to redesign catechism programs by incorporating contextual theological content, interactive learning strategies, and technology-based learning environments. The use of digital platforms, mobile applications, and online communities can support more flexible, engaging, and continuous faith formation processes. In addition, strengthening the role of catechists, parental involvement, and structured mentoring systems is essential to ensure the successful implementation of the curriculum.

This research contributes theoretically by enriching the discourse on Christian religious education, particularly in the integration of faith formation,

character education, and educational technology within a unified curriculum framework. It also contributes practically by offering a conceptual model that can be adapted by churches in developing more relevant, contextual, and transformative catechism programs for youth.

Future research is recommended to adopt a research and development (R&D) approach to design and empirically test a prototype of the proposed curriculum in real church settings. Longitudinal studies are also needed to evaluate the long-term impact of catechism programs on youth spiritual resilience and behavioral transformation. Furthermore, future studies should explore the role of contextual factors such as family dynamics, digital literacy, and levels of community engagement, as well as develop comprehensive assessment instruments that measure cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes in an integrated manner.

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