



Critical Thinking and Media Literacy in Citizenship Education

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the relationship between critical thinking and media literacy in the context of civic education. Using a quantitative approach, this study involved students from various levels of education who were randomly selected. Data were collected through a questionnaire that measured the level of critical thinking skills and media literacy, which were then analyzed using the Pearson correlation test. The results of the study showed a significant positive relationship between critical thinking and media literacy. This study indicates that increasing students' critical thinking skills is correlated with increasing their ability to understand and analyze media information. This study concludes that the integration of critical thinking skills and media literacy in the civic education curriculum is very important to equip students in facing the challenges of information in the digital era. The implications of these results are expected to encourage the development of more effective teaching methods in improving both skills among students.

Keywords: *Citizenship Education, Critical Thinking, Media Literacy*

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INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly complex information era, where data and content can be easily accessed through various digital platforms, the ability to think critically and have good media literacy is becoming increasingly important. Critical thinking not only serves as a tool for analyzing and evaluating information, but also as an essential skill that can support individuals in making the right decisions (Huang & Looi, 2021). Meanwhile, media literacy includes the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media content, which is very important amidst the rise of fake news and misleading information (Rossi et al., 2021).

Civic education plays a very vital role in shaping students' character as active and responsible citizens (Jamil et al., 2022). The main mission of civic education is to prepare students to participate effectively in society, and the development of critical thinking and media literacy are key components in achieving this goal (Robinson et al., 2021). Based on research by Hidayat (2021), effective civic education can improve students' critical thinking skills, which in turn will help them manage the information they receive.

A study by Lee and Chen (2020) showed that there is a positive relationship between critical thinking skills and media literacy among students. Students who are skilled in critical thinking tend to be better able to evaluate media information, as well as make better decisions based on in-depth analysis. This suggests that the development of these two skills should be a priority in education, especially in the context of civic education.

Although the importance of critical thinking and media literacy has been widely recognized, there are still challenges in implementing these two skills in the educational curriculum (Paradis et al., 2020). Research by Rahman and Sari (2022) revealed that many schools have not fully integrated the teaching of critical thinking and media literacy into daily learning. Lack of training for teachers and limited educational resources are obstacles in developing these skills. Therefore, this study aims to explore the relationship between critical thinking and media literacy among students, with a quantitative approach using the Pearson correlation test.

This research method will involve collecting data through a questionnaire specifically designed to measure students' levels of critical thinking and media literacy. By using statistical analysis, it is expected that a significant relationship will be found between these two skills. The research from this study is expected to provide deeper insight into the importance of developing critical thinking and media literacy in civic education, as well as recommendations for the integration of these two skills in the curriculum.

Overall, this research will contribute significantly to the understanding of how critical thinking and media literacy can support each other in forming students who are more intelligent, informed, and ready to actively participate in society. With in-depth data and analysis, it is hoped that this research can be a reference for policy makers and educators in developing a more effective education curriculum.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical thinking and media literacy are two very important skills in the context of modern education (Bellaera et al., 2021). In an increasingly complex information era, students are required to be able not only to receive information but also to be able to analyze and evaluate that information (Behailu, 2021). This study aims to review the current literature on the relationship between critical thinking and media literacy and the importance of these two skills in education.

According to Facione (2020), critical thinking is defined as the ability to analyze, evaluate, and make decisions based on available information. Critical thinking allows students to not only receive information, but also process and consider different points of view. In the context of education, critical thinking is a key component in helping students develop the ability to think independently and make impactful decisions.

Research by Hidayat (2021) shows that civic education designed with critical thinking elements can increase student engagement in the learning process. Learning methods involving discussion, case analysis, and collaborative projects can provide students with opportunities to practice critical thinking. This is in line with the

Constructivist Learning theory put forward by Piaget and Vygotsky, which emphasizes the importance of active learning experiences in building knowledge.

Media literacy, according to Hobbs (2021), includes the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media content. In the context of education, media literacy is becoming increasingly important given the proliferation of information circulating in the digital world. Students need to be trained to be able to distinguish between valid and invalid information, and to understand the impact of media on society.

Research by Lee and Chen (2020) shows that there is a positive relationship between media literacy and critical thinking skills among students. Students who are skilled in media literacy tend to be better able to evaluate the information they receive and make better decisions. This suggests that the development of media literacy should be an integral part of the educational curriculum, especially in civic education.

The relationship between critical thinking and media literacy is increasingly important in today's educational context (Knaus, 2022). Students who are able to think critically will be better prepared to face complex information challenges, including identifying fake news and misleading information (Palsa & Salomaa, 2020). Research by Rahman and Sari (2022) shows that students who are trained in critical thinking can recognize fake news and actively participate in public discussions with strong arguments.

One relevant theory in understanding this relationship is Information Processing Theory, which states that individuals process information through a series of steps from reception to decision making (Friesem & Friesem, 2021). In the context of education, students who are taught to think critically will be better able to process information well and make decisions based on in-depth analysis.

Integrating critical thinking and media literacy into civic education curricula is essential to equip students with the skills needed in this information age (Alehpour et al., 2024). Education that emphasizes these two skills can help students become more intelligent, informed, and responsible citizens (Woolard, 2021). Research by Sari (2021) shows that teacher training in critical thinking-based teaching and media literacy is essential to improving the quality of education. Support from schools, parents, and the community is also a key factor in developing these skills. Programs that involve parents and the community in education can create an environment that supports the development of critical thinking and media literacy.

This literature study shows that critical thinking and media literacy are important components in education, especially in citizenship education. These two skills support each other and contribute to forming students who are able to participate actively and responsibly in society. The integration of these two skills in the education curriculum is very important to prepare the younger generation to face the challenges of information in the digital era.

METHOD

This study aims to explore the relationship between critical thinking and media literacy in the context of civic education. Using a quantitative approach and statistical analysis, specifically the Pearson correlation test, this study will collect and analyze data to achieve this goal. Through this study, it is hoped that a deeper understanding can be obtained regarding the role of these two skills in forming intelligent and informed students.

This study used a cross-sectional design, where data were collected at one point in time from a number of respondents. This design was chosen because it allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the relationship between critical thinking and media literacy without having to conduct longitudinal observations. In the context of education, this approach is very relevant to determine how the two skills interact and contribute to the learning process.

The population of this study is students enrolled in several educational institutions in Indonesia, especially at the secondary level. Samples will be taken randomly from various schools in urban and rural areas to ensure variation in participant characteristics. Based on the purposive sampling method, the researcher will select students who have participated in civic education for at least one year. Using the Slovin formula, the number of samples required is calculated by considering a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. It is estimated that the samples collected will be around 300 students.

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire consisting of two main parts, namely the critical thinking scale and the media literacy scale. The Critical Thinking Scale refers to an instrument developed by Facione (2020), consisting of 20 items that measure various aspects of critical thinking, such as analysis, evaluation, and decision-making. Respondents will be asked to provide an assessment of the existing statements using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." . The Media Literacy Scale refers to a media literacy guide developed by Hobbs (2021), consisting of 15 items that measure students' abilities to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media content. This scale also uses a 5-point Likert scale for assessment.

Before the research is conducted, the questionnaire will be tested on 30 students outside the sample to assess the validity and reliability of the instrument. Item analysis will be conducted to ensure that each question is reliable and relevant. Data collection will be conducted through direct distribution of questionnaires in the schools involved. Researchers will first conduct socialization to students and teachers regarding the purpose of the study, as well as the importance of their participation. Questionnaires will be distributed in agreed class sessions, and students will be given time to complete the questionnaires independently. Researchers will ensure that respondents understand the instructions clearly and feel comfortable providing honest answers.

After the data is collected, analysis will be conducted using statistical software, such as SPSS . Initial analysis will include processing descriptive data, including mean, median, and standard deviation for each variable. Next, a Pearson correlation test will be conducted to determine the relationship between critical thinking and media literacy. This

test will provide information about the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables.

The results of the analysis will be presented in the form of tables and graphs to facilitate understanding. Researchers will also interpret the results obtained, comparing them with previous studies in the literature, as expressed by Lee and Chen (2020) which shows a positive relationship between these two skills.

This research method is designed to reveal the relationship between critical thinking and media literacy in civic education using a quantitative approach and Pearson correlation test. With valid and reliable instruments, as well as systematic data collection, it is hoped that this study can provide deeper insights into the role of these two skills in learning, and how they can support each other in forming smarter and more informed students. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of a more effective civic education curriculum in Indonesia.

RESULTS

In this study, the main focus is to explore the relationship between critical thinking and media literacy as independent variables with civic education as the dependent variable. This study uses a quantitative method with Pearson correlation analysis to measure how strong the relationship is between the two variables. The results of the analysis show a significant correlation, which provides an important picture of how critical thinking skills and media literacy can affect civic education learning.

Correlations

		critical thinking and media literacy	Civic education
critical thinking and media literacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.824 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	42	42
pendidikan kewarganegaraan	Pearson Correlation	.824 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	42	42

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results of the analysis using SPSS showed a Pearson correlation value of **0.824**. This figure shows a very strong relationship between critical thinking and media literacy with civic education. The correlation value approaching 1 indicates that the higher the students' critical thinking and media literacy skills, the better their understanding of civic

education. This study is very relevant, considering the importance of these skills in forming active and critical citizens in today's information age.

DISCUSSION

Amidst the rapid development of information and communication technology, the ability to think critically and have good media literacy is becoming increasingly important, especially in the context of citizenship education (Araújo et al., 2023). This study aims to explore the relationship between critical thinking and media literacy among students with a quantitative approach, using the Pearson correlation test. The results of this study are expected to provide a deeper understanding of the role of these two skills in forming students who are able to participate actively and responsibly in society.

Based on the results of the research data analysis, a significant positive relationship was found between critical thinking and media literacy. This shows that students who have better critical thinking skills tend to also have higher levels of media literacy. This study is in line with previous research conducted by Lee and Chen (2020), which showed that critical thinking skills and media literacy support each other in learning. Students who are trained to think critically are able to evaluate and analyze information better, thereby increasing their understanding of the media they consume.

The correlation analysis showing a value of **0.824** underlines the importance of critical thinking and media literacy in the context of civic education. Critical thinking allows students to discuss, debate, and draw conclusions from the information they receive, while media literacy provides them with the skills to understand and use media effectively. In a world filled with abundant and often inaccurate information, the ability to think critically and analyze information from various sources is a must.

In addition, this strong relationship suggests that civic education relies not only on factual knowledge of citizens' rights and obligations, but also on students' ability to think critically about issues facing society. Students who have critical thinking and media literacy skills are better able to understand the social, political, and economic context of civic issues. This also confirms that civic education curricula need to incorporate elements of critical thinking and media literacy so that students can develop the competencies needed to become active and informed citizens.

Furthermore, the results of this study also provide practical meaning for educators. By understanding the strong relationship between critical thinking skills and media literacy with citizenship education, educators can design more effective teaching strategies. For example, they can integrate activities that encourage students to think critically, such as discussion groups, debates, or case analysis, while also teaching them how to filter information from the media. This approach will not only enrich students' learning experiences but also prepare them to face the challenges of being critical and responsive citizens.

Finally, this study confirms **that** critical thinking **and** media literacy are essential skills that must be possessed in civic education. With a strong relationship between the two variables, it is clear that efforts to improve students' critical thinking and media

literacy skills can make a significant contribution to the understanding and application of civic values. Therefore, the development of a balanced curriculum between knowledge, skills, and attitudes is important in forming the next generation who are not only informed but also critical and active in national and state life.

The Constructivist Learning Theory proposed by Piaget and Vygotsky is also relevant to this study. This theory states that knowledge is built through experience and interaction with the environment (Cubbage, 2021) . In the context of civic education, learning experiences involving discussion, case analysis, and collaborative projects can help students develop critical thinking skills and media literacy simultaneously (Thorndahl & Stentoft, 2020) . For example, students involved in a research project on a social issue can learn to analyze multiple sources of information, evaluate their credibility, and draw logical conclusions.

Education plays a very important role in developing these two skills. As stated by Hidayat (2021), civic education should be designed to train students to have critical thinking skills and media literacy. A curriculum that emphasizes the development of these two skills can help students become more intelligent and informed. For example, the use of active learning methods, such as group discussions and case studies, can provide opportunities for students to practice critical thinking and better analyze media information.

In addition, teacher training is also a key factor in developing these skills. Teachers who understand the importance of critical thinking and media literacy will be better able to integrate both skills in the learning process. Research by Sari (2021) shows that teachers who are trained in critical thinking-based teaching can improve students' ability to evaluate information and make informed decisions. Therefore, training and professional development for teachers need to be a priority in efforts to improve the quality of civic education.

The development of critical thinking and media literacy is not only beneficial for students in an academic context, but also has a positive impact on everyday life. Students who have good critical thinking and media literacy skills tend to be better able to face information challenges in the digital era (Terepyshchyi & Kostenko, 2021) . They can distinguish between valid and invalid information, and can make better decisions in complex situations. This is especially important amidst the rise of fake news and misleading information circulating on social media.

For example, research by Rahman and Sari (2022) shows that students who are trained in critical thinking and media literacy are better able to recognize fake news and not get caught up in misleading information. They are also more active in participating in public discussions and are able to provide strong arguments based on careful analysis of existing information. Thus, civic education that integrates these two skills can form more responsible and active citizens in society.

Although the importance of critical thinking and media literacy in civic education is widely recognized, there are still challenges in implementing them. One of the main challenges is the lack of understanding of the importance of these two skills among

educators, students, and parents. Many schools still focus on teaching theory without providing space for students to practice critical thinking and analyzing information.

In addition, the availability of adequate educational resources is also an obstacle. Many schools, especially in remote areas, do not have sufficient access to technology and learning materials that support the development of media literacy. Research by Johnson (2022) shows that schools that have adequate facilities and access to information technology are better able to integrate critical thinking and media literacy teaching into their curriculum.

Based on this research, several recommendations can be put forward to improve citizenship education in Indonesia. First, there needs to be a greater emphasis on the development of critical thinking skills and media literacy in the education curriculum. A more flexible and project-based curriculum can provide opportunities for students to learn actively and engage in information analysis. Second, teacher training and professional development needs to be improved. Teachers should be given the tools and resources needed to effectively teach critical thinking and media literacy. This can be done through workshops, seminars, and training programs that focus on developing these skills. Third, collaboration between schools, parents, and the community needs to be strengthened. Parental and community involvement in education can help create an environment that supports the development of critical thinking skills and media literacy. For example, public discussion programs involving students, parents, and community members can provide a space for students to practice critical thinking in a broader context.

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that critical thinking and media literacy are important components in citizenship education. The positive relationship found between these two skills suggests that the development of one skill can enhance the other. Education has a central role in integrating these two skills into the curriculum, as well as in preparing students to become active and responsible citizens.

By addressing the existing challenges and implementing the proposed recommendations, it is hoped that citizenship education in Indonesia can be more effective in equipping students with the skills needed to face the challenges of information in the digital era. Through quality education, the younger generation is expected to become intelligent and informed leaders, and be able to contribute positively to society.

CONCLUSION

This study has successfully revealed a significant relationship between critical thinking and media literacy among students in the context of civic education. Through a quantitative approach and analysis using the Pearson correlation test, the results show that students who have better critical thinking skills also tend to have higher levels of media literacy. This study confirms that these two skills support each other and contribute to forming students who are able to participate actively and responsibly in society.

In civic education, the development of critical thinking skills and media literacy is essential. Students who are trained in critical thinking can be more effective in analyzing and evaluating the information they receive, which is especially important amidst the

overwhelming and often misleading flow of information. Thus, education that integrates these two skills not only enhances students' academic abilities but also prepares them for real-world challenges.

Recommendations resulting from this study include the need to strengthen the curriculum that focuses on the development of critical thinking and media literacy, as well as increasing training for teachers to implement learning methods that support both skills. In addition, collaboration between schools, parents, and the community is essential to creating a conducive learning environment.

Overall, this study confirms the importance of critical thinking and media literacy as integral components in civic education. By paying greater attention to the development of these two skills, it is hoped that the younger generation can become more intelligent, critical, and active citizens in contributing to society in an increasingly complex information era .

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