



Optimizing Digital Literacy Through Problem-Based Learning Models to Improve Student's Critical Thinking Skills

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Globalization and rapid technological advancements demand that education evolve to incorporate digital literacy, essential for developing critical thinking skills. This research was conducted to describe the effect of optimizing digital literacy through the PBL model on the critical thinking skills of secondary school students. **Method:** This research used a Classroom Action Research model and was carried out in 3 cycles of four activities: planning, action, observation, and reflection. **Results:** The student's critical thinking skills significantly improved throughout PBL implementation. PBL encourages students to be active in solving real problems and allows them to apply digital literacy optimally. The strong correlation between digital literacy and critical thinking skills shows that both complement each other in evaluating and utilizing digital information effectively while honing critical judgment in problem-solving. These interrelated competencies strengthen the learning process, with a focus on problem-solving and in-depth analysis within the PBL framework. **Novelty:** This study evaluates the role of PBL in enhancing critical thinking via digital literacy in Society 4.0. It underlines the significance of technology in learning, evidencing its benefit to critical thinking, and offers recommendations for educators to utilize PBL and digital literacy to unlock student's potential.

INTRODUCTION

Education is essential to life because it equips one with the ability to interpret things in real-life scenarios and must align with current developments. This aligns with Ki Hajar Dewantara's philosophical thoughts regarding education, which state that education should follow the nature of the student's era. In light of the current circumstances, globalization and the speed at which technology is developing have caused times to change more and more. In this instance, education has to accompany every ever-changing stage of life, including the utilization of technology innovation within the classroom.

The educational system is required to develop students in the digital age who are proficient with information and technology and can locate, organize, and communicate information (Natalia & Sukraini, 2021). The statement suggests that to get information, one must possess digital literacy skills, which are necessary to keep up with the explosion of online knowledge. Digital literacy includes searching for and selecting information, thinking critically, being creative, collaborating with others, communicating clearly, and being aware of computer security and changing social conditions. It involves more than just being able to operate digital devices (Naufal, 2021). There are four digital literacy competencies, according to Gilster, namely Internet Searching, Hypertextual Navigation, Content Evaluation, and

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