

Critical Literacy and Information Filtration: The Embodiment of the Rights and Obligations of Good Citizens

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ABSTRACT

Critical literacy and information filtration are essential in a democratic climate as a manifestation of the rights and obligations of good citizenship. Critical literacy and information filtration are essential for maintaining a healthy social order, free from news that is inconsistent with the facts. This research is crucial for every citizen to understand the importance of enhancing critical literacy and information filtration, especially in the context of Indonesia, which is undergoing a massive information dissemination process in the current technological era. This is essential for every citizen to be wise and responsible in disseminating and receiving information, both directly and digitally. This research uses a qualitative research method with a literature study data collection technique. The literature study was conducted through the stages of data collection, reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate the importance of enhancing critical literacy and information filtration in the current massive digital era. The importance of critical literacy and information filtration are important in maintaining the social order by prioritizing education as a good foundation so that every citizen can share or receive information well and wisely.



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INTRODUCTION

In social life, implementing critical literacy in everyday life is crucial. In the context of Indonesian society, implementing critical literacy is ideal. This is because Indonesia adheres to the principles of democracy, where sovereignty rests with the people, who are responsible for the effective implementation of the government system. Increasing literacy will have a significant positive impact on all sectors that influence the lives of many Indonesians. In the current era of disruption, increasing literacy is crucial for combating information that could divide national unity. As has been the case with many social groups in Indonesia, the potential for conflict in this era of disruption is very close to the community.

Information deemed divisive, often referred to as hoaxes, stems from a lack of critical literacy among citizens in social life. Disinformation can create polarization and divide national solidarity in Indonesia (Sarjito, 2024). This means that disinformation in Indonesia in this current era of disruption must be a shared concern, both for the public and the government. Research conducted by Muzykant (2021) found cases of disinformation practices in Indonesia regarding disinformation or hoaxes about the effectiveness of drugs to conspiracy theories about the origin of the virus, which also had a negative impact on the handling of COVID-19 and caused concern and anxiety among the public, especially in the promotion of vaccination.

In the highly diverse Indonesian society, disinformation must be avoided in order to prevent divisions within society that could create divisions and undermine the stability of national unity. Central Statistics Agency (2020) Research has shown that the characteristics of Indonesia's ethnic population are highly diverse and represent a form of cultural and social richness throughout the archipelago. This fosters a spirit of national unity. This spirit of cooperation fosters a positive social life. Therefore,

Indonesia's highly diverse life should ideally not be destroyed by disinformation circulating among the public, whether digitally or in person.

In social life, the way to combat disinformation is by fostering a culture of critical literacy so that every citizen can properly and intelligently understand the information circulating in society. Disinformation within society can negatively impact the unity of every Indonesian citizen amidst a diverse society. Meanwhile, referring to the history of the Indonesian nation's struggle, the community must remain united to face all the dynamics of today's life, as stated by the Indonesian proclaimer, Soekarno, namely *ekasila*, meaning cooperation (Zai et al., 2024). Therefore, one of the most ideal ways to combat disinformation within the community is to prioritize education for all Indonesians.

In the context of a pluralistic society, education is very important in the process of social life in order to create a harmonious and mutually supportive society so that it can maintain the stability of the order of life created by each citizen (Larsson & Bengt, 2023; Zai & Arpannudin, 2023). Realistically, creating and implementing ideal education is not easy and requires considerable time. However, the positive impact it provides will be immense and can be a future investment for the advancement of every civilization. Education is a highly complex method for transforming the fabric of national life, especially in a country that adheres to democratic principles. Like other primary needs in life, education is one of the foundations for creating and shaping human resources that can contribute to the advancement of a nation (Zai, 2022).

Education must be a foundational pillar that must be prioritized by a nation and state. As citizens face all the complexities of life, education becomes one way to achieve political, social, and economic objectives, and even the most basic things, namely forming critical citizens through increasing critical literacy. Critical literacy is a very important need for democratic life in facing the current social, political, and economic dynamics related to learning about theoretical truth and reality (Allan, 2025). Critical literacy is closely related to the credibility and quality of information received regarding the dissemination of information, and if there are deficiencies or errors, it is important to provide a critical evaluation (Sirén & Sulkunen, 2025). This means that critical literacy is a way for every citizen to provide credibility to information in social life, and this will influence the order of national and state life.

Citizens who have implemented critical literacy and information filtration as a way of carrying out responsibilities in national and state life. In the current era, researchers analyze that there is a paradox that occurs in the critical literacy of Indonesian citizens. Critical literacy is important for every citizen to improve in order to sharpen their reasoning and thinking skills. If analyzed from data obtained from the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 study conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Indonesia is ranked sixth in terms of reading ability of 15-year-old students, with a score 359 points lower than countries such as Singapore, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, and Thailand (Center for Academic Assessment, 2024). This means that in the context of reading, which is part of literacy, Indonesia is still ranked low (Nasrullah & Asmarini, 2024).

Critical literacy is important to implement and even improve because, in addition to providing a positive impact for every citizen and the state, critical literacy is a method in the practice of good citizenship. Critical literacy is one way for every citizen to create citizens who carries out the command of the 1945 Constitution, Article 31 paragraph 5, that every citizen has the constitutional right to receive education (Constitution, 1945). This means that every citizen has the opportunity to obtain a proper education in order to create a better order of national and state life. Every citizen who consciously has the intention to pursue a proper education is a citizen who has an active and responsible attitude.

Referring to the components of good citizens, there are important components such as normative, active and personal dimensions, which are ideally carried out by every citizen by involving components, values, norms, ideals, ethics, behavior and participation (Treviño et al., 2016). This means that critical literacy and information filtration can have a positive impact on the social order, leading to a more stable social life through the information provided. Furthermore, if every citizen prioritizes the accuracy of information through proper information filtration, then it can be said that each citizen has become a good citizen by prioritizing critical literacy methods that prioritize education. Therefore, when linked to the Indonesian context, the democratic process will be implemented more effectively.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this study is the library research method or library research using qualitative data analysis techniques, which is one of the studies by collecting data from many journals, books, or other documents relevant to the research that can support reference studies and be used as basic materials to carry out research systematically by collecting, processing, and concluding the data obtained. Research with this library method is very relevant to the research being carried out because it is a theoretical study and uses scientific references that are also related to the social science studies being studied (Sugiyono, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Critical literacy and information filtration

Literacy is crucial for every citizen to create a better democratic climate in all social activities. Literacy is crucial in a democratic climate because it is a method used to enable every citizen to start on a sound foundation. This is as mentioned regarding the meaning of literacy, which refers to the activities of reading and writing effectively in various contexts (Pilgrim, 1974). Literacy is one of the foundations for citizens to develop a more critical mindset in responding to the many situations that arise in national and state life.

In the context of a democratic country like Indonesia, literacy is crucial to improve, particularly within the education system, both formal and informal. Considering the current realities of Indonesia, with the rapid development of digital technology and a democratic climate that tends to allow for rapid access to information, one thing the Indonesian people can do is improve critical literacy. As research has shown, Peng (2022) Implementing and improving critical literacy in citizens does have its own challenges because it refers to the complexity of elements such as parental support from the family.

Study Peng (2022) also shows a positive trend that increasing literacy, especially in the current digital era, can improve self-control and reduce technological stress in the classroom learning process. Another finding is that it can be positively correlated with improvements in socioeconomic status and parental education. This means that the importance of critical literacy in the situation of the Indonesian nation and state not only has a positive impact on individuals but also has a very positive influence on the surrounding environment and the nation and state. This will influence other sectors, such as improving the quality of education, improving the economic sector, and also having a very significant positive impact on the democratic order in Indonesia.

Improving critical literacy will significantly impact all sectors of national and state life in Indonesia. Improving critical literacy among every citizen will specifically reduce the spread of false information or hoaxes in national and state life. In the current rapidly developing digital era, digital literacy is crucial for every citizen to critically respond to and understand available information. Therefore, improving critical literacy in the current digital era is crucial for combating or reducing the spread of false information or fake news. Furthermore, improving critical digital literacy can create responsible citizens (Lestari et al., 2025). Especially in the current era of disruption, social media is rapidly expanding in the distribution of all kinds of information in this era. However, many in the current generation are not utilizing social media to its full potential (Batubara & Habibi, 2024).

Citizens who are aware of improving critical literacy, especially in the current era of technology and disruption, demonstrate civic responsibility to create good information within the community. This allows every citizen to filter and select information effectively and wisely. It is not uncommon for some citizens to exploit the situation by freely sharing false information that can provoke other citizens. With today's massive technology, digital media content contains hoaxes, slander, shame, hate speech, and information that causes friction within society, leading to division (Rohmiyati et al., 2020).

In this study, the researcher emphasizes that critical literacy and information filtration are a unified whole, representing the hope of the Indonesian nation's reality, in order to create a healthy national and state order. If literacy is properly realized, citizens can wisely avoid information that leads to division in society, as they will be able to filter information effectively.

Rights and obligations

Rights and obligations are a unified whole that has equal urgency in the context of the Indonesian nation and state. Indonesian citizens, under the current democratic system, should ideally understand the meaning and implementation of these rights and obligations so that each citizen can

wisely exercise them in their environment, as well as in the nation and state. Learning about rights and obligations is crucial for the nation and state, as Indonesia is currently progressing toward a better future within the dynamics of democratic life (Nazhifah & Najicha, 2023).

The Indonesian Constitution states in Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution that the right to education is a constitutional right of every citizen. This is also mentioned in research by Palguna (2023). The right to education is a positive right, requiring the state to create general policies that ensure its fulfillment and allow citizens to enjoy it fully. This is also closely related to the concept of education, which must be properly implemented by the state through a national education system and free from deviations that could harm the nation and state.

In national and state life, many Indonesians often do not understand the essence of rights and obligations. However, in everyday life, citizens must understand the essence of rights and obligations to be responsible in their social lives. This is also stated by Sari (2024) The balance between rights and obligations is crucial because it can positively impact citizens' sense of responsibility in social behavior. This implies that rights and obligations cannot be separated, but rather form a unified whole.

Rights and obligations should ideally be balanced and utilized effectively in social life to ensure peaceful community life. A balance between rights and obligations can be achieved when every citizen has a good understanding of their rights and obligations, and can understand and comprehend the essence of their rights and obligations (Nugraha et al., 2023; Purba et al., 2025). The importance of awareness of good citizen behavior so as not to neglect the rights and responsibilities of members of society. And very concrete action is needed to address cases of neglect of responsibility in everyday life (Azhari et al., 2023).

In the context of rights and obligations, when linked to improving critical literacy, it has relevance to education. This means that every citizen has the right to education to create a social order with a critical mindset, which will foster a healthy democratic life. It is also an obligation because every citizen is obligated to create a healthy lifestyle through good methods. Education is the primary source or benchmark for improving the welfare of citizens, protecting and fulfilling all needs within their capabilities (Sujatmoko, 2010).

Good citizenship

In the context of social life, citizens have a responsibility to provide good deeds to others. In this sense, citizens are not merely individuals who can develop individualistic attitudes, but can become partners with the state who truly create prosperity for others (Namang, 2020). One thing that is of particular concern in the context of responsibility is that citizens and the state become partners who can collaborate in all matters. In fact, citizens and the state are inextricably linked. Universally, being a good citizen remains a matter of debate and exists at the discourse level, depending on the regulations implemented by each state (Denters & Gabriel, 2007).

In the context of good citizenship as it relates to education, implementing the educational process effectively is a form of responsibility for providing a better life in the future. This is because good citizenship must provide a sound understanding of knowledge (Kligler-Vilenchik, 2017). This means that the concept of implementing good education is one way to create a decent standard of living, even if it takes time. Education is a valuable investment in transforming the way of life in many sectors, with government support.

In the context of education, every citizen has the right to receive education without discrimination. Every citizen is obliged to demonstrate good character and actions in social life. This is to ensure security and comfort for themselves and other citizens. Being a good citizen can be analyzed through one's actions in life, including establishing good relationships with others (Pykett et al., 2010). This means that actors or citizen figures must establish good relationships with each other so that each resulting relationship has a positive impact, not only on each individual, but also on the diversity that exists in each place, especially explicitly in the Indonesian context.

Ideally, a good citizen should be able to participate in the context of the nation and state to determine a better future for the next generation. Ideally, every citizen can participate actively and directly to make a contribution that has a good or positive impact on the nation and state. If analyzed more broadly, there are many ways that citizens can participate actively; this can be done through individual and group activities that have a positive impact on the nation and state and can influence government policies that favor the people, such as exercising the right to vote in the general election process that is held to determine the future of the nation (Reynald et al., 2024).

Indonesia, which adheres to democratic principles, ideally requires every citizen to demonstrate diligence and good character in carrying out social activities, prioritizing self-activity. Critically, democracy should be a path for the Indonesian people to care about the processes of life, particularly in the context of the right and obligation to receive and pursue education. This also refers to the norms of social life so that every nation can function well (Treviño et al., 2016). In a democratic climate, education is crucial for creating a way of life that conforms to social norms and can improve various aspects of life, including social, economic, and sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

Based on the researcher's discussion regarding critical literacy and information filtration by each citizen, it is related to rights and obligations. This is as conveyed by Pykett (2010) The concept of being a good citizen can be analyzed through the actions taken. When linked to critical literacy and information filtration, a very close relationship is found, particularly regarding rights and obligations. In the context of democracy in Indonesia, improving citizen literacy is crucial to a critical understanding of all forms of information surrounding each citizen.

This is also closely related to the era of globalization, particularly the massive global circulation of information. Every citizen is obligated to carefully filter the information they know so that any available information can be managed effectively, conveyed or even acted upon wisely. Wisely managing this massive amount of information requires a strong foundation, such as education or literacy, which must be improved by every citizen. Improved literacy significantly impacts the fabric of Indonesian life, as a nation with a democratic climate that maintains national diversity.

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