

# Building Smart and Good Citizens in The Digital Era Through Citizenship Education in Indonesia

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## Abstract:

This research seeks to analyze and reflect the urgency of building smart and good citizens in the digital era through the citizenship education program, because it includes efforts to strengthen civic competence in an inclusive and massive manner, citizenship education, and increase youth literacy based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. This research was completed based on a qualitative approach, using literature study methods, data analysis techniques, namely reduction, display and verification. The result is, in a world full of easily accessible information, smart citizens must be able to sort and filter correct and trustworthy information. They must have the ability to verify the veracity of information and analyze its sources. This is important to avoid the spread of fake news (hoaxes) and promote accurate knowledge. The digital era also provides many opportunities to participate in people's lives online. Smart citizens can use digital platforms to share ideas, voice opinions, and contribute to issues they care about. They must also be able to communicate well and respect other people's opinions in a digital environment. In addition, Smart citizens must understand the importance of digital ethics in online interactions. They must respect the rights and privacy of others, avoid cyberbullying behavior, and promote a positive and inclusive attitude in cyberspace. Forming good citizens in the digital era means forming individuals who are responsible, empathetic and have social awareness in the use of technology. In order to form smart and good citizens in the digital era, education and awareness of the importance of digital literacy and digital ethics need to be improved. Schools and educational institutions should include subjects that teach technology skills and wise use. Apart from that, the role of parents and the community is also important in providing guidance and good examples in the use of digital technology. In this way, we can create an intelligent, responsible and ethical society in this digital era.

**Keywords:** smart and good citizen; digital era; education; citizenship.

## 1. Introduction

In today's increasingly advanced digital era, the development of information and communication technology has had a significant impact on people's daily lives. The internet has become an integral part of our lives, influencing the way we communicate, work and even learn. This requires us to have sufficient digital skills to actively participate in an increasingly connected society.

The transformation of technology and social media has created new challenges in forming the character of intelligent and virtuous citizens. Citizenship education, as an integral part of the education system, must adapt to current developments and carry out the important task of forming smart and good citizens in the digital era. According to Budimansyah (2010), smart and good citizens refer to individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have good attitudes and behavior as citizens. They have extensive knowledge about their rights and obligations as citizens, and have a deep understanding of the values, morals and ethics in national and state life.

Developing people's intelligence, character and skills is a real step in taking Indonesia to the peak of civilization, because it reflects people as intelligent and virtuous citizens. Substantively, citizenship education in the digital era will facilitate the government's efforts to realize the vision of smart and good citizenship, because it contains various studies, materials, theories, models, approaches, concepts and practices of intelligent and virtuous citizenship. So that people understand and implement their rights and

obligations consciously, including voluntarily to make a positive contribution to the progress of the nation and state. According to Saidi (2022), the community's moral movement to strengthen civic literacy is a real effort to build Indonesia as a developed and civilized nation, because with competent civic literacy, the community will understand their rights and obligations, and play an active role in the public interest.

Referring to data published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017), the data confirms that Indonesia will become the 5th strongest economic power in the world in 2045, in that year Indonesia will contribute 38% of the total productive population in ASEAN, this will certainly reducing the influence and competitiveness of developed countries in the Asia Pacific region such as China, Japan and others. With this data, the management of the demographic bonus must be managed consistently based on the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, as well as being professional, modern and sustainable considering that Indonesia's current international competitiveness in the Southeast Asia region is still not optimal, as data from the World Economic Forum (2019) below.

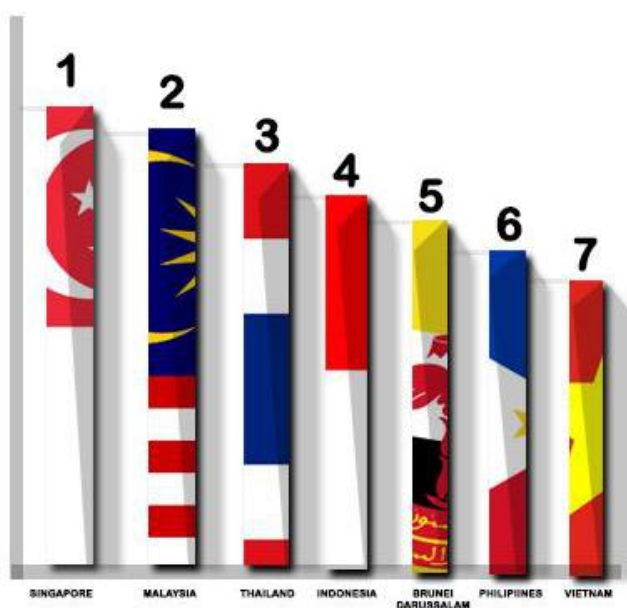


Figure 1. Competitiveness Ranking of Countries in ASEAN  
Source: World Economic Forum (2019)

Referring to Figure 1 above, the reality of Indonesia's demographic bonus which has not been able to have a positive impact on increasing Indonesia's competitiveness at the international level, can certainly be overcome through the vision of building smart and good citizens in the digital era through citizenship education which represents an effort to shape society as superior Indonesian human resources. , competitive and characterful. Based on the argumentative information above, the author considers it necessary to compile a scientific study regarding the urgency of building smart and good citizens in the digital era through citizenship education.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Citizenship Education in the Digital Era

Quoted from the Citizenship Education Module Book MKDU4111 written by Lasiyo (2021), it explains that Citizenship Education is nationality and nationalism education with an emphasis on cognitive and effective scientific reasoning abilities as well as fostering rational national and state awareness, having comprehensive knowledge and understanding, and having a good attitude. think and behave comprehensively, and be responsible to the nation and state. In another book, Arifin (2010) said that

citizenship education is a learning process that aims to form the attitudes and behavior of good citizens, who have love and loyalty to the country, and have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the government system, rights and obligations as citizen.

Meanwhile, according to Arikunto (2012), citizenship education is a learning process that aims to form citizens' awareness and concern for social, national and state life. Suyanto (2017) explains something different, according to him, citizenship education is a learning process that aims to form democratic attitudes and behavior, respect differences, and be responsible as an active and participatory citizen. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the definition of citizenship education is a learning process that aims to form good attitudes, behavior, knowledge and understanding related to social, national and state life.

Citizenship education in the digital era refers to efforts to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed by individuals to face the challenges and opportunities that arise in the digital world. Citizenship education in the digital era aims to equip individuals with knowledge about the rights and obligations of citizens in a digital context, as well as ethics and responsibilities related to the use of information and communication technology. Citizenship education in the digital era should exist and be implemented in various educational institutions in Indonesia. The digital era is a condition of the times or life where all activities or activities that support life are made easier by technology. The digital era has replaced several technologies in the past which have been adapted to today's times to make them more practical and modern. The digital era has resulted in technological developments in various fields. Digital era education is carried out as an effort to develop human resources in Indonesia. Because of the importance of modern human resources in the digital era.

Behind the many advantages and positive things resulting from the digital era, on the other hand there are many negative things or impacts resulting from the development of citizenship education in the digital era. Behind the many aspects of citizenship learning, such as a sense of nationalism, national integrity and a sense of independence. There is one thing we cannot learn from technology or the digital era, namely humanity and morals. How the digital era can have limits, accompanying students in learning. In several aspects of learning, such as a sense of nationalism, mutual cooperation, national integrity and a sense of humanity, these things also have their own challenges in their implementation.

## **2.2 Smart and Good Citizen in the Digital Era**

The movement to build smart and good citizens in the digital era has been programmed by the government in various fields, one of which is through education, namely citizenship education. In the Merdeka curriculum implemented by the government currently, all subjects are aimed at creating intelligent and virtuous citizens. Starting from cultivating students' attitudes, personalities and responsibilities, it has been directed in every subject at all levels of education. Citizenship subjects (Civic) are one of the subjects that are closely related to cultivating students' attitudes and personalities as well as attitudes of responsibility (Setiawan, 2019).

Citizenship Education (PKn) which is taught at every level of education is prepared to face the competition of life in society and globally. Its presence, starting from elementary school to university level, can be said to be an effort to build the character of Indonesia which has become a multicultural country (Nanggala, 2020). This citizenship education will shape the character of smart and good citizens in accordance with the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution.

From this, it can also be seen that citizenship education can form smart and good citizens. However, its implementation in this digital era requires new stimuli (Syam, 2019). It is very important and very necessary to be a smart and good citizen in this digital era to avoid various threats of crime. Currently, we have found many people who are smart and good citizens in Indonesia, but behind that, of course there are

also many people who are the opposite. This can be seen from various kinds of bad, dirty comments, hate speech and even the spread of false information (hoaxes) carried out on social media. Social media has tremendous opportunities in this digital era, ideas uploaded on social media not only resonate on social media, but are also able to bring concrete facts to real life (Mu'amar, 2019).

### 3. Research Method

This research was completed based on a qualitative approach, using the literature study method, because it makes it easier for researchers to explore, analyze and verify data in depth and continuously. This research is oriented towards completing a model for developing smart and good young citizens through a youth organization program based on civic literacy, as a novelty, as well as academic recommendations in forming smart and good young citizens, empowering youth organizations in a quality, innovative, inclusive and sustainable manner, and strengthening the civic literacy of the younger generation. References in this research are directed at, firstly, journals, as primary references, because they have high validity values, secondly, books and documents, so that they are comprehensive and representative, because they minimize research errors of a procedural, conceptual and also practical nature. The data analysis technique in this research certainly optimizes the technique from Miles and Hubermann (2014) which emphasizes qualitative data analysis techniques, namely, reduction, display and verification.

### 4. Results and Discussion

According to Budimansyah (2012: 180), curricularly, Civics is designed as a learning subject which aims to ensure that students are able to: (a) think critically, rationally, creatively in responding to citizenship issues, (b) participate actively and responsibly, and act responsibly. intelligent in community, national and state activities and anti-corruption; (c) develop positively and democratically to shape ourselves based on the characters of Indonesian society so that we can live together with other nations; (d) interact with other nations in the world arena directly by utilizing Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

Citizenship education has an important role in forming the character of good citizens. In the digital era like now, adapting to technological developments is also very important. Citizenship education must be able to teach national values and obedience to the law, as well as develop critical and creative thinking skills in facing various challenges in the digital era. Thus, it is hoped that citizenship education can help create a young generation who has strong character and is able to contribute positively to the nation and state.

The construction of the role of Citizenship Education in building smart and good citizens in the digital era is based on the view of the urgency in building intelligent, civilized and virtuous citizens who have capable digital literacy skills based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. This concept and orientation will certainly be difficult can be realized if they contradict each other, so integration is needed so that the vision of building smart and good citizens can be realized.

Citizenship education has an important role in building smart and good citizens in the digital era. The following are several roles of citizenship education in building Smart and Good Citizens in the digital era: first, Building Digital Awareness; Citizenship education can help individuals to have a heightened awareness of the digital environment and its impact on personal, social and political life. This includes an understanding of digital risks and security, rights and obligations in the digital space, as well as ethics in the use of technology. Second, Developing Digital Skills; Citizenship education can help individuals develop the digital skills necessary to participate actively and productively in digital society. This includes the ability to access, evaluate and use information critically, as well as skills in communicating, collaborating and innovating using technology.

Next is the third, Promoting Digital Ethics and Responsibility: Citizenship education can help individuals to internalize ethical and responsible values in the use of digital technology. Individuals are taught to respect the privacy, freedom of expression, and intellectual property rights of others, and to be

responsible in using and participating in digital spaces. Fourth, Building Critical and Creative Thinking Abilities: Citizenship education can help individuals to develop critical and creative thinking skills in dealing with information and issues that exist in the digital world. Individuals are taught to analyze, evaluate, and sort information encountered in digital spaces, as well as produce new ideas and creative solutions in overcoming social and political problems. And finally, fifth: Encouraging Active Participation in Digital Spaces: Citizenship education can encourage individuals to actively participate in digital spaces in a positive and beneficial way. Individuals are taught to use technology and social media as tools to share information, discuss, and contribute to building an inclusive, just, and sustainable society.

With good citizenship education in the digital era, individuals can become Smart and Good Citizens who have good knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the use of technology, and are able to actively participate in building a better digital society.

#### **4.1 Benefits of Citizenship Education in the Digital Era**

Citizenship education in the digital era has an important role in forming intelligent, critical and responsible citizens in facing the challenges and changes that occur in digital society. The following are some of the benefits of citizenship education in the digital era:

- a. Understanding and Managing Technology: Civic education can help individuals to understand and manage digital technology wisely. This includes the ability to use technology ethically, understand digital risks and security, and respect privacy and freedom of expression in the digital world.
- b. Awareness of Digital Rights and Obligations: Citizenship education can help individuals to understand their digital rights and obligations. This includes an understanding of copyright, privacy, freedom of speech, as well as responsibility in using and participating in digital spaces.
- c. Building Social Awareness: Civic education in the digital era can help individuals understand and address social issues that arise in the digital space, such as online hate, cyberbullying, and disinformation. Individuals are taught to be responsible users, respect differences, and promote kindness in the digital space.
- d. Active Participation in Digital Space: Citizenship education can encourage individuals to actively participate in digital space, both in terms of sharing information, discussing, and contributing to the development of an inclusive and sustainable digital society.
- e. Strengthening National Identity: Citizenship education in the digital era can help strengthen national identity and a sense of belonging to the country. Through citizenship education, individuals are taught about the history, culture and values of the nation, as well as how to contribute to the development of the country through the digital space.

In the digital era, citizenship education needs to adapt the curriculum and learning methods that are relevant to technological developments and social changes that are occurring. Citizenship education in the digital era must encourage individuals to become active, responsible and ethical citizens in interacting in the digital world.

#### **4.2 Digital Literacy in Citizenship Education**

Digital literacy is an individual's ability to use digital technology and media wisely, critically and ethically. In the context of citizenship education, digital literacy is an important factor in helping students become intelligent and virtuous citizens in the digital era. Here are some important aspects of how digital literacy relates to citizenship education:

- a. Identify Correct Information: Digital literacy helps students in identifying correct and reliable information among the flood of information in the digital world. They are taught to develop critical skills in assessing information sources, understanding bias, and identifying hoaxes or disinformation.
- b. Understanding Rights and Obligations in the Digital World: Students are taught about their rights and obligations in the digital world, including online privacy, internet ethics, and their responsibilities for the content they share and the contributions they make in online communities.
- c. Use of Technology for Active Participation: Digital literacy helps students use technology to actively participate in political and social life. They can use social media, online platforms, and other digital tools to voice their opinions, engage in social campaigns, and support civic issues they consider important.
- d. Critical Thinking Skills in Evaluating Information: Digital literacy helps students develop critical thinking skills in evaluating information they encounter on the internet. They learn to question sources of information, identify bias, and use critical thinking in assessing claims or arguments they encounter in political and social contexts.
- e. Protection Against Digital Threats: Students learn about digital security and how to protect themselves and their personal information from digital threats, such as fraud, hacking, and cyberbullying.
- f. Use of Technology for Social Benefits and Social Concern: Digital literacy can help students understand how to use technology to spread messages and social movements that support civic issues, human rights, or other social problems. They can understand how technology can be used as a tool for positive change in society.
- g. Online Communication Skills: Students learn effective communication skills in the online world, including how to discuss constructively, collaborate, and respect different perspectives in a digital environment.
- h. Digital Ethics: Digital literacy also includes understanding the ethics of behaving in the digital world, including respectful attitudes, ethical use, and privacy protection.

Citizenship education that includes digital literacy helps students to be better prepared to face challenges and opportunities in the digital era. It equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to become intelligent, ethical and active citizens in an increasingly connected world.

#### **4.3 The Role of Citizenship Education in Building appreciation for the diversity of cultures, religions and political views in the Digital Era**

Building appreciation for the diversity of cultures, religions and political views in the digital era is an important aspect of citizenship education. Below are some steps and strategies that can help promote respect for diversity in the digital environment:

- a. Multicultural Education: Integrate multicultural education in the citizenship education curriculum. It helps students understand, appreciate, and respond to the diversity of cultures, religions, and political views in society.
- b. Bias Awareness: Teach students about biases and stereotypes that may appear in digital media. Encourage them to identify and avoid biases and stereotypes in their use of technology and social media.
- c. Case Studies and Discussion: Use case studies about diverse cultures, religions, and political views in the real world. Discuss issues related to discrimination, intolerance, or inequality that can arise in the digital environment.

- d. Promote Open Dialogue and Discussion: Encourage students to participate in open and constructive dialogue about differences in culture, religion, and political views. This may include in-class discussions, online forums, or social platforms.
- e. Media Literacy: Provide training in media literacy that includes an introduction to social media, online news, and digital information. Teach how to identify valid sources of information and critically analyze content.
- f. Introduction to Other Cultures and Religions: Introduce students to different cultures, religions, and political views through activities such as visits to places of worship, visits to multicultural libraries, or meetings with guests representing different groups.
- g. Using Technology to Understand Diversity: Leverage technology, such as video conferencing or online platforms, to connect students with people from different cultures and religions. This can give them the opportunity to hear first-hand views from people who have experience of such diversity.
- h. Collaborative Projects: Provide collaborative projects that allow students from different cultural backgrounds, religions, and political views to work together to achieve a common goal. This helps them understand the value of collaboration and diversity in action.
- i. The Importance of Respectful Language: Teach students the importance of using respectful, non-derogatory language in online interactions. Encourage them to avoid racist, discriminatory or hate-filled statements.
- j. Coaching by Teachers: Teachers can play an important role in guiding students in understanding, appreciating, and managing diversity. They can be role models for how to behave ethically in the digital world.
- k. Building respect for the diversity of cultures, religions and political views in the digital era is important for creating an inclusive and harmonious society. Civic education that incorporates these aspects helps shape citizens who are open-minded, tolerant, and ready to contribute to a pluralistic society

#### 4.4 Citizenship Challenges in the Digital Era

The impact of technology and social media on citizens' behavior and perceptions is a complex and evolving topic. While these technologies can provide benefits, they also raise challenges that require deep understanding and digital literacy to manage their impact positively. Here are some of the challenges of citizenship in the digital era:

a) The influence of fast and abundant information

Technology and social media provide fast and abundant access to information. This can influence citizens' behavior by allowing them to quickly receive information about important issues. But it can also cause information overload, where each individual must be able to filter the information he receives.

b) Spread of Fake News (Hoax) and Disinformation

Social media often becomes a forum for the spread of fake news, hoaxes and disinformation. This can distort citizens' perceptions of important issues and influence decision-making based on misinformation.

c) Bubble Filter and Echo Chamber

Algorithms on social media can create "Filter Bubbles" where individuals only get information in the form of views and opinions that are in line with the views they believe in. This can reduce the diversity of perspectives and strengthen existing beliefs (echo chamber), which can influence their perceptions and assessments of social and political issues.

d) Social Mobilization Ability

Information technology, especially social media, has helped mobilize citizens in social and political action. For example, demonstrations, online petitions and social campaigns are often driven through social media, this allows citizens to be actively involved in social change.

e) Influence on Public Participation

Social media can influence the level of public participation in political contestation. While some people may feel more motivated to engage in voting and political activities, others may feel passive and only engage in online actions without active participation in the real world.

f) Formation of Public Opinion

Social media plays a role in shaping public opinion. Issues that receive attention on social media can influence citizens' opinions about state officials' policies and other important issues.

g) Effect on Mental Health

Excessive exposure to social media and technology can have a negative impact on citizens' mental health, such as addiction to online games, online gambling, and stress from seeing other people display their luxury on social media.

h) Inter-Community Relations

Technology can also influence relationships between citizens, both in terms of communication and direct social interaction, one of which is the way individuals interact in society.

## 5. Conclusion

In today's digital era, it is important to form smart and good citizens. In this context, smart refers to a person's ability to use digital technology wisely and effectively, while good refers to good attitudes and moral values in using this technology. Digital technology continues to develop rapidly and has a significant impact on everyday life. Being a smart citizen means having the knowledge and skills necessary to adapt and use this technology wisely. This will help individuals to remain relevant and competitive in the digital era.

In a world full of easily accessible information, smart citizens must be able to sort and filter correct and trustworthy information. They must have the ability to verify the veracity of information and analyze its sources. This is important to avoid the spread of fake news (hoaxes) and promote accurate knowledge. The digital era also provides many opportunities to participate in people's lives online. Smart citizens can use digital platforms to share ideas, voice opinions, and contribute to issues they care about. They must also be able to communicate well and respect other people's opinions in a digital environment.

In addition, Smart citizens must understand the importance of digital ethics in online interactions. They must respect the rights and privacy of others, avoid cyberbullying behavior, and promote a positive and inclusive attitude in cyberspace. Forming good citizens in the digital era means forming individuals who are responsible, empathetic and have social awareness in the use of technology.

In order to form smart and good citizens in the digital era, education and awareness of the importance of digital literacy and digital ethics need to be improved. Schools and educational institutions should include subjects that teach technology skills and wise use. Apart from that, the role of parents and the community is also important in providing guidance and good examples in the use of digital technology. In this way, we can create an intelligent, responsible and ethical society in this digital era.

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