




# Literature Review: Digital Literacy in Social Studies Education as a Tool for Social Construction

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**Abstract.** The application of digital literacy in Social Studies Education as a tool for social construction aims to examine the role of digital literacy in social studies education (SSE) as a crucial instrument in shaping and constructing society. Through a comprehensive literature review, this research explores how digital literacy is integrated into the SSE curriculum and its impact on the formation of students' social, cultural, and political identities. The study also provides concrete examples of the application of digital literacy in SSE across various global contexts. This research highlights the importance of digital literacy in preparing students to face the increasingly complex challenges of the digital world.

**Keywords:** Curriculum, Digital Literacy, Educational Technology, Social Studies Education, Social Construction, Social Identity.

## 1 Introduction

Digital literacy enhances students' critical thinking skills, helping them differentiate between valid and misleading information, especially amid disinformation and fake news. For instance, during elections, students learn to analyze various news sources and recognize biases, fostering reflective citizenship. Additionally, digital literacy encourages student engagement through platforms like social media and blogs, enabling them to voice opinions and participate in social movements like Black Lives Matter. By integrating digital literacy into social studies education, students become more informed, critical, and participative members of society. This research explores various studies on digital literacy, its components, and its role in social studies education through global case studies.

Digital literacy is the ability to understand, use, and critically evaluate information in various digital formats, including text, images, and video. It encompasses both technical skills for operating devices and critical thinking skills for navigating and creating digital content. Eshet-Alkalai (2004) defines digital literacy as involving abilities like photographic, information, and technological literacy, which enable responsible and ethical use of digital information [6]. Buckingham (2007) adds that it also includes active participation in digital environments, such as social media and collaborative projects, while maintaining critical awareness of how information is produced and consumed in the digital landscape[2][3][4]. Digital literacy involves understanding, using, and critically evaluating information across digital formats. It encompasses technical

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skills and critical thinking necessary for responsible information consumption and production. Key components include:

1. **Information Literacy:** The ability to find, evaluate, and use information effectively, as highlighted by Gilster (1997) [8].
2. **Technology Literacy:** Understanding and using digital hardware and software (Ng, 2012) [12].
3. **Media Literacy:** Analyzing and creating media messages (Hobbs, 2010) [9].
4. **Visual Literacy:** Understanding and using visual images effectively (Avgerinou & Ericson, 1997) [1].
5. **Communication Literacy:** Effectively communicating in digital environments (Rheingold, 2012) [13].

The integration of digital literacy into the education curriculum aims to equip students with the skills needed to succeed in a society increasingly reliant on digital technology. Some approaches used to integrate digital literacy into the curriculum include:

1. **Interdisciplinary Approach:** Digital literacy is integrated into various subjects, including social sciences, language, arts, and sciences. Through this approach, learners use digital technology as a tool to achieve learning objectives across different disciplines.
2. **Project-Based Learning:** Learners are assigned projects that require the use of digital tools to search for information, collaborate with classmates, and present their findings. For example, a research project in social studies education might involve online data searches, social media analysis, and presentations using digital presentation tools.
3. **Use of Online Resources:** Curricula that incorporate online resources such as e-learning platforms, digital libraries, and educational apps help learners develop digital literacy while studying traditional subjects.

Social Studies Education aims to shape learners into critical, active citizens who are aware of their social responsibilities. In today's digital era, digital literacy has become a crucial element in social studies education because it provides learners with the tools they need to understand, analyze, and participate in discussions about complex social issues.

Digital literacy in the context of social studies education not only refers to the technical ability to use digital devices but also involves critical understanding of how social and political information is produced, disseminated, and consumed. This includes the ability to evaluate the credibility of information sources, understand media bias, and use digital technology to communicate and participate in social discourse.

Integrating Digital Literacy into the Social Studies Curriculum can be done through various methods, including:

1. **Using Digital Resources:** Students can research social issues like climate change and human rights using the internet, learning to access data and analyze statistics from diverse perspectives.
2. **Social Media as a Learning Tool:** Social media serves as a platform for examining social and political dynamics, allowing students to analyze the spread of information and the role of influencers, such as studying Twitter's impact during the Arab Spring or Black Lives Matter.

3. **Project-Based Learning:** Students apply digital literacy through projects focused on social issues, like creating blogs or documentaries, combining digital skills with social understanding for practical experience.
4. **Digital Content Analysis:** Students analyze digital content, including articles and social media posts, to identify bias and misinformation, enhancing their ability to understand how information shapes social and political perceptions.

Digital literacy in social studies education has a significant impact on students' understanding of social issues:

1. **Enhancing Critical Understanding:** Digital literacy helps students critically evaluate information by actively seeking and analyzing diverse sources, allowing them to understand complex social issues and differentiate between biased narratives and objective data.
2. **Increasing Social Participation:** It encourages students to engage with social issues through online discussions, blogs, and digital campaigns, enhancing their understanding and providing practical experience in using digital tools for social change.
3. **Understanding Technology's Impact:** Digital literacy enables students to grasp how technology influences social, economic, and political dynamics, including issues like data privacy and cybersecurity, and understand the implications for individual freedoms and public policy.

The application of digital literacy in social studies education in the global context, across different countries, including how technology is used to discuss issues like human rights, democracy, and environmental sustainability, can be seen in the following cases:

### **Case Study in Finland**

In Finland, digital tools are integrated into Social Studies education to explore democracy and citizen participation. Students learn to access and analyze information from various sources using online platforms, interactive apps, and social media. This hands-on approach enables them to understand political and social dynamics and engage in the democratic process.

Through collaborative projects, students gather data, conduct surveys, and interact with their communities, enhancing their knowledge of rights and responsibilities as citizens. The use of digital tools empowers students to voice their opinions and actively participate in public discussions. Overall, this approach equips young people with the skills needed to be informed and critical citizens in a democratic society[5].

### **Case Study in Singapore**

In Singapore, integrating digital literacy into the Social Studies curriculum is essential for shaping national identity in the context of globalization. Students use digital tools like social media and online platforms to explore cultural and historical perspectives that influence Singapore's identity. The curriculum includes technology-based projects that address cultural diversity, social integration, and national values.

As a result, students gain a deeper appreciation of their cultural heritage while understanding the impact of foreign influences. The implementation of digital literacy enhances their awareness of national identity and prepares them to engage with global

changes. Overall, Social Studies education in Singapore fosters patriotism and equips students to navigate challenges while maintaining their national identity[19].

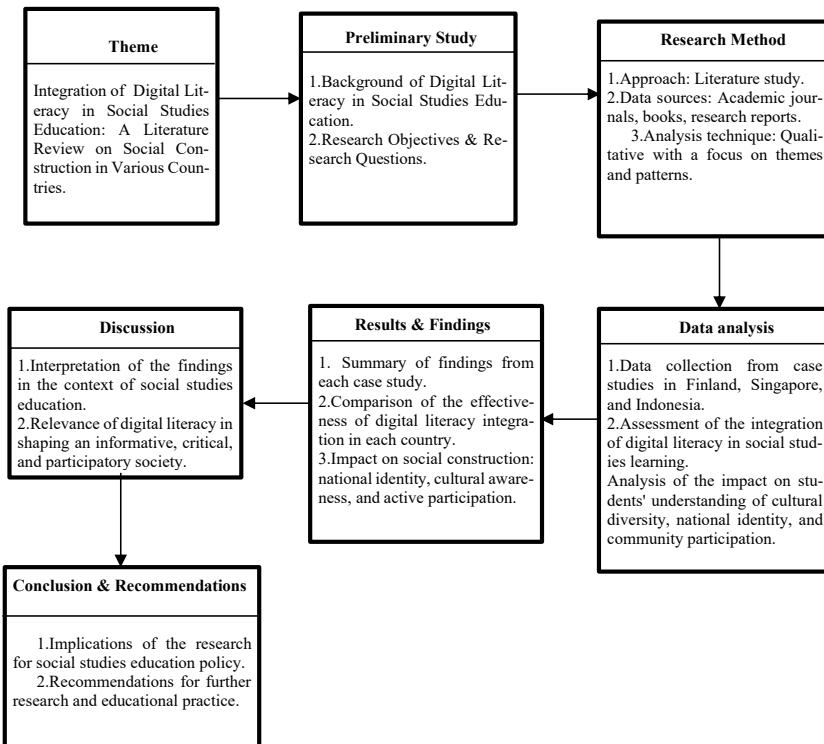
**Case Study in Indonesia**

In Indonesia, the "Rumah Belajar" program, initiated by the Ministry of Education and Culture, integrates digital literacy into Social Studies education. It provides a platform for students to access diverse digital materials related to cultural diversity and national history. Through this program, students engage with videos, articles, and quizzes about various Indonesian cultures, such as Balinese, Minangkabau, and Betawi, and research the nation's independence struggle.

The program enhances students' understanding of national values and cultural diversity, fostering appreciation for cross-cultural collaboration. By integrating digital literacy, "Rumah Belajar" helps create a generation that is academically proficient and culturally aware, promoting a strong sense of nationalism and harmony in society [16][17][18].

**2 Research Methodology**

This research methodology employs a literature review approach that focuses on the collection and analysis of various academic sources, including journals, books, and relevant research reports. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the integration of digital literacy in Social Studies education and its impact on social construction. By examining various references, the researcher can identify patterns, trends, and findings related to digital literacy and Social Studies education from different contexts, such as studies in Finland, Singapore, and Indonesia.



**Fig. 1.** Research Framework Literature Review: Digital Literacy in Social Studies Education as a Tool for Social Construction

The literature review provides a strong theoretical foundation to analyze how digital literacy shapes students' understanding of social, cultural, and political issues. In this context, the researcher will explore how the use of digital tools in Social Studies education in each country contributes to the development of national identity, understanding of cultural diversity, and active participation in society. By analyzing findings from various sources, the researcher can draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the methods used in Social Studies education and how this contributes to a more informative, critical, and participatory social construction.

Concrete examples from studies in Finland, Singapore, and Indonesia illustrate how digital literacy is integrated into Social Studies education to enhance students' understanding of democracy, cultural diversity, and national identity. By using a literature review approach, this research can connect various findings from these countries, resulting in comprehensive insights into the role of digital literacy in shaping individuals who are more informed and participatory in society.

### 3 Analysis

Digital literacy has significant implications in shaping the social and cultural identity of students through Social Studies education. By utilizing digital tools and platforms, students not only access information but also engage in a learning process that shapes their understanding of cultural diversity and social dynamics. From case studies in Finland, Singapore, and Indonesia, it is evident that the integration of digital literacy in Social Studies education has several positive impacts on the formation of social and cultural identity.

1. **Enhancing Cultural Awareness and National Identity:** In Finland, the application of digital tools in Social Studies education enables students to explore concepts of democracy and citizen participation. By using technology to access information about local history and culture, students become more aware of the values that shape their national identity. Through discussions and collaborative projects involving digital resources, students learn to appreciate

their cultural heritage and understand their role in a democratic society. This creates a generation that takes pride in their national identity and is committed to active participation in social and political life.

2. **Appreciation of Cultural Diversity:** In the context of Singapore, digital literacy serves as a bridge for understanding cultural diversity amid the influence of globalization. Students involved in digital literacy programs in Social Studies are taught to analyze how local cultures interact with foreign cultures. With access to various digital sources, they can explore the traditions and values of various ethnic groups in Singapore. This not only strengthens their own cultural identity but also fosters appreciation for the diversity around them, which is essential in building a harmonious and inclusive society.
3. **Active Participation in Social Processes:** In Indonesia, the "Rumah Belajar" program demonstrates how digital literacy can enhance students' understanding of cultural diversity and national history. By accessing diverse educational materials through digital platforms, students are encouraged to actively participate in discussions on social issues. This develops their awareness of their role as responsible citizens. Students trained in digital literacy feel more empowered to voice their opinions and contribute to building a better society. Thus, digital literacy functions as a tool to create a more critical and participatory social identity, where individuals are able to interact and engage in decision-making processes that affect their communities.

The implications of digital literacy in the formation of social and cultural identity are crucial for equipping the younger generation with the skills and understanding needed to adapt to an ever-evolving society. Through Social Studies education that integrates digital literacy, students not only become consumers of information but also active participants with a high awareness of cultural diversity and their social responsibilities. Thus, digital literacy not only enhances students' understanding of national identity and local culture but also shapes them into critical, informative, and participative individuals in a global society.

The integration of digital literacy into Social Studies education offers many benefits but also faces various challenges that need to be addressed. Based on the literature review and narratives discussed earlier, these challenges and opportunities can be analyzed in a global context.

#### **Challenges in Integrating Digital Literacy:**

1. **Technological Access Gap:** One of the main challenges in integrating digital literacy is the technological access gap. In many countries, especially in rural or underdeveloped areas, access to digital devices and stable internet connections is still limited. This hinders students' ability to utilize digital tools in Social Studies learning. For example, in Indonesia, although the "Rumah Belajar" program aims to enhance digital literacy, technological access challenges in some regions remain an obstacle to the program's implementation.
2. **Lack of Teacher Training:** Besides the access gap, the lack of teacher training in using digital technology is also a challenge. Many educators are not yet accustomed to using digital tools in their teaching. Without adequate training, teachers may struggle to effectively integrate digital literacy into the Social

Studies curriculum. In Finland and Singapore, although there are efforts to implement technology in education, the success of these programs largely depends on the readiness of teachers to adopt new teaching methods.

3. **Risk of Misinformation and Disinformation:** In the digital age, students are confronted with the risk of inaccurate information and disinformation. Low digital literacy can lead students to fall into false information, which in turn can affect their understanding of social and cultural issues. This requires a curriculum that not only teaches technological skills but also educates students on how to critically evaluate information.

### **Opportunities in the Global Context:**

1. **Enhancing Access to Learning Resources:** The integration of digital literacy in Social Studies education opens up opportunities to enhance students' access to various learning resources. With digital tools, students can explore different historical and cultural perspectives that may not be accessible in traditional teaching. Programs like "Rumah Belajar" in Indonesia allow students to access materials from various regions, enriching their understanding of cultural diversity and national history.
2. **Encouraging More Active Student Engagement:** The implementation of digital literacy in Social Studies education can encourage more active student engagement in the learning process. By using digital platforms, students can collaborate on projects, discuss social issues, and participate in technology-based research. This not only increases learning motivation but also develops the critical and analytical skills needed to participate in a global society.
3. **Preparing Global Citizens:** Another opportunity arising from the integration of digital literacy is the ability to prepare students as informed and participative global citizens. In the context of globalization, Social Studies education equipped with digital literacy can help students understand the complex dynamics of the world, including issues such as climate change, migration, and human rights. This provides students with the skills needed to contribute to global dialogue and influence social change at both local and international levels.

Integrating digital literacy into Social Studies education faces significant challenges, including the technological access gap, lack of teacher training, and the risk of disinformation. However, these challenges also create opportunities to enhance access to learning resources, encourage student engagement, and prepare them as active global citizens. With the right strategies, Social Studies education can serve as a powerful tool in shaping a younger generation that not only understands social and cultural diversity but is also ready to face the challenges of the digital era.

### **Impact on Social Construction**

The application of digital literacy in Social Studies education plays an important role in shaping a more critical and informed society. Through the integration of technology in learning, students are not only equipped with knowledge but also with the skills to

analyze, evaluate, and interpret information. This analysis will outline how digital literacy in Social Studies education helps shape a more critical and informed society, based on the literature review and narratives discussed earlier.

1. **Development of Analytical and Critical Skills:** Digital literacy in Social Studies education helps students develop analytical skills essential for evaluating information. For example, in Finland, students use digital tools to explore democracy, fostering critical thinking about their societal roles.
2. **Promoting Discussion and Collaboration:** Digital literacy creates dynamic, collaborative spaces for students to share opinions and engage in discussions on social issues. In Singapore, digital tools allow students to interact with diverse cultural perspectives, enriching their understanding and teaching them to appreciate different viewpoints.
3. **Facilitating Access to Diverse and Valid Information:** Programs like "Rumah Belajar" in Indonesia enhance students' access to diverse learning materials, broadening their knowledge of national identity and values. This encourages them to seek various sources of information and develop a deeper understanding of social, cultural, and political issues, making them informed and critical citizens.

The application of digital literacy in Social Studies education has a significant impact on shaping a more critical and informed society. Through the development of analytical skills, collaboration, and access to diverse information, students are equipped with the ability to think critically and participate actively in society. With adequate education, the younger generation can become individuals who not only understand social issues but also can contribute positively to building a better and more informed society.

## 4 Recommendation

Based on the analysis and findings presented in the paper, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance Social Studies education, educational institutions should integrate digital literacy comprehensively into the curriculum, teaching not only technical skills but also critical thinking and ethical use of digital tools. This integration should be context-specific, reflecting the unique social, cultural, and historical backgrounds of each country to foster relevance and connection to national identity.

Continuous professional development for educators is essential, equipping them with the skills to effectively utilize digital tools and establish support networks for sharing best practices. Addressing technological inequities is crucial; efforts must be made to ensure all students, especially in underserved areas, have equitable access to digital devices and internet connectivity. Targeted interventions, such as mobile learning units and community-based programs, can help bridge these gaps. Additionally, the curriculum should emphasize media literacy, training students to critically evaluate online information and recognize misinformation while developing their critical thinking skills through assignments focused on social and cultural issues. Fostering active citizenship is vital, as educational programs should encourage students to engage in real-world social issues through digital platforms, promoting civic responsibility. Incorporating



global perspectives and connecting students with peers from different countries can further enrich their understanding.

Finally, ongoing research and evaluation of the integration of digital literacy in Social Studies education are necessary to monitor effectiveness and explore how emerging technologies can enhance learning. By implementing these recommendations, educational systems can better harness the power of digital literacy, ultimately contributing to the development of a more informed and participatory society.

## 5 Conclusion

The conclusion emphasizes the importance of digital literacy in social studies education as a tool for societal construction. This research shows that digital literacy is not just a technical skill but also a crucial tool in shaping students' understanding of the complex social world. It also provides recommendations for developing a more integrative and participatory curriculum.

This literature review demonstrates that digital literacy in Social Studies education plays a critical role as a tool for constructing a more critical, informed, and participatory society. Through the integration of technology in Social Studies learning, students not only gain knowledge about cultural diversity, history, and social dynamics but are also trained to analyze and evaluate information critically.

Various case studies from Finland, Singapore, and Indonesia show that the application of digital literacy enables students to explore relevant social issues and participate in discussions that enrich their understanding of national identity and their role as citizens. However, challenges such as technological access gaps, lack of teacher training, and the risk of misinformation need to be addressed to effectively integrate digital literacy into Social Studies education.

Overall, digital literacy not only enhances students' academic skills but also equips them to be more prepared to face social and political challenges in the information age. Therefore, Social Studies education that integrates digital literacy has the potential to create a more inclusive society that values diversity and actively participates in decision-making processes that affect social life.

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