

## IMPROVING CIVICS EDUCATION / PPKn LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LIFE SKILLS APPROACH FOR CLASS X-2 STUDENTS OF SMA NEGERI 1 SUKAMULIA, EAST LOMBOK

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### Abstract:

This study aimed at determining whether there is an increase in the students' learning achievement of Civic Education class by implementing the life skills approach in the teaching and learning process. This study was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Sukamulia and the research object was the students of Class X-2 in the academic year 2023/2024. This research was classroom action research (CAR) and conducted to determine the increasing of Civic Education class learning achievement through the implelementation of life skills. This research was conducted over a period of 3 months, from August to October 2024. The percentage of learning achievement of students in the Civic Education subject after the implementation of the Life Skills Approach in Cycle I was 68%, and in Cycle II was 100%. It indicated that the learning process was quite successful. This study showed the increasing of students' learning results. It also proved that by implementing the Life Skills Approach, student learning performance could be improved in Civic Education classes.

**Keywords:** *Learning performance, life skills approach*

## INTRODUCTION

The quality of education in Indonesia remains a pressing issue, especially at the primary and secondary levels, due to systemic challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, outdated teaching methods, and underprepared teachers. According to Tilaar (2009), improving education is essential for fostering human resource development and advancing national progress. Additionally, a study by INOVASI highlights how a lack of teacher training and ineffective pedagogical practices impede student learning outcomes plays a central role in shaping student learning experiences. Sanjaya (2011) asserts that effective learning occurs through dynamic interactions between teachers and students, emphasizing the need for innovative teaching strategies. The traditional approaches often fail to engage students, particularly in Civics Education (PPKn), a subject requiring active participation and critical thinking. Current educational reforms stress the integration of real-world applications to bridge this gap.

One promising method is the Life Skills Approach, which provides practical, step-by-step learning aligned with students' everyday experiences. This approach encourages active learning and equips students with competencies relevant to their social and professional lives. The Life Skills Approach emphasizes equipping learners with practical skills essential for daily life and future challenges. According to UNICEF (2012), life skills include psychosocial competencies such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and effective communication, which enhance the learner's ability to interact productively with their environment. Meanwhile, Hendry et al. (1995) highlight that embedding life skills in education fosters holistic development, ensuring learners are adaptable to various social and professional contexts. Integrating this approach into pedagogy enhances engagement and real-world applicability, bridging the gap between education and everyday life.

The Life Skills Approach addresses various challenges in education by emphasizing practical, step-by-step learning designed to improve student comprehension. This method integrates teacher demonstrations with student-centered training, creating an environment where theoretical concepts connect with real-life applications (UNICEF, 2012). For teachers, especially at the elementary level, staying informed about societal, national, and global dynamics is critical to fostering relevant and engaging learning experiences.

In the context of PPKn (Civic Education), incorporating technological advancements and aligning lessons with societal needs can enhance student engagement and make learning more meaningful. Research shows that students perform better when lessons combine theory with practical applications (Hendry et al., 1995). However, challenges persist, as reflected in test results that reveal a gap between educational goals and outcomes.

Research shows that students perform better when teaching aligns with their interests and real-life contexts, making lessons more engaging and impactful. This study investigates the implementation of the Life Skills Approach in PPKn lessons for Class X-2 at SMAN 1 Sukamulia. By focusing on interactive, practical teaching, the study aims to enhance both engagement and learning outcomes, demonstrating how education can better address contemporary challenges. Through this approach, teachers are expected to become facilitators of meaningful learning, adapting to the dynamic needs of society and preparing students for future success.

This study examines how the Life Skills Approach can improve Civic Education/PPKn learning outcomes for Class X-2 students at SMAN 1 Sukamulia. By linking Civic Education/PPKn content to technology and social applications, this research aimed at demonstrating that innovative teaching strategies can significantly enhance learning performance.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

According to WJS. Poerwodarminto in the Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia, achievement is defined as: "as a result that has been achieved or a result that has been worked on." (WJS Poerwodarminto, 1976, p. 362). According to Saleh in the Kamus Rakyat Populer, the definition of achievement is: "A good result of effort." (Moch. Saleh, 1984, p. 254). And the definition of achievement according to Karya Utama is: "Achievement." (Karya Utama, 1983, p. 149).

Meanwhile, the definition of teaching and learning according to Winarno Surakhmad in his book entitled Dasar dan Teknik Metodologi Pengajaran, is that: "*Learning is a growth process produced by the interaction between stimuli and responses.*" (Winarno Surakhmad, p. 65). And according to Team P3G, it is said: "Learning is a student's effort in a specific place using evaluation as an integral part of the teaching and learning process, so that the teacher can group his students according to their achievements."

The Life Skills Approach is an educational framework focused on equipping learners with skills necessary for managing real-world challenges effectively. It emphasizes core competencies such as decision-making, problem-solving, creative and critical thinking, self-awareness, empathy, and effective communication. Rooted in experiential learning theory, it encourages active student participation through practice, reflection, and real-life applications.

According to WHO (1997), life skills are critical for enhancing personal and social development, enabling individuals to adapt to their environments. UNICEF (2012) highlights the importance of embedding these skills into formal and non-formal education to build resilience and practical competence.

There are some key components of Life Skills Approach:

1. Cognitive Skills: Enhancing problem-solving, critical thinking, and decision-making abilities.
2. Personal Skills: Fostering self-awareness, emotional regulation, and resilience.
3. Interpersonal Skills: Building communication, teamwork, and empathy.
4. Pedagogical Methods: Role-playing, Collaborative learning, Problem-solving exercises and Real-world simulations

Life skills promote holistic development, ensuring students are prepared not only for academic success but also for personal and professional life. For example, they help students understand how to make informed decisions, build healthy relationships, and handle stress effectively.

Life skills are abilities that enable individuals to face life and its challenges with confidence, without feeling overwhelmed, and then proactively and creatively seek and find solutions to overcome them. The general goal of the life skills approach is to use education to develop the potential of students for their future roles. The specific goals of the life skills approach are:

1. Actualizing the potential of students so that they can use it to solve problems they encounter.
2. Providing opportunities for schools to develop flexible learning, in line with the principles of large-scale education.

3. Optimizing the utilization of resources in the school environment, by providing opportunities for the utilization of available resources in the community, in line with the principles of school-based management.

In the life skills approach, it is important to pay attention to each step to ensure that the learning outcomes meet the teacher's expectations.

**a. Planning:**

1. Things that students do not know or understand should be started with in the lesson.
2. Motivate students with teaching materials that are attractive and beneficial to students.
3. Encourage students to be interested in learning new things.

**b. Acting**

In the learning process, the teacher and students carry out activities with the following steps:

1. Introducing new material
2. Linking this material to the existing knowledge of the students.
3. Finding appropriate learning methods or principles to enhance the acceptance of new material.
4. Actively involving students in interpreting and understanding new teaching materials.
5. Actively involving students in problem-solving.
6. Emphasizing structural connections, i.e., the connection between new material and various aspects of daily life activities in the environment.
7. Processing the processed material into student knowledge and skills.
8. Developing ways to assess student learning outcomes, such as psychomotor attitude assessments and cognitive assessments.
9. Using the assessment results to identify student weaknesses, deficiencies, and problems faced by teachers.

The PPKn (Civic Education) curriculum in grade X of Senior High School aims to equip students with an understanding of their rights and obligations as citizens, as well as the values embedded in Pancasila as the foundation of Indonesia's state. The learning approach used is

expected to develop critical thinking, responsibility, and social skills necessary for national and civic life.

According to various sources, in the PPKn curriculum for grade X, the topics covered include: 1) Pancasila as the basis of the state: This part focuses on understanding the five principles of Pancasila, which serve as the foundation for life as a nation and state in Indonesia (Prasetyo, 2016); 2) Democracy: Introduces basic concepts of democracy, the election process, and how democracy is practiced in Indonesia (Sutrisno, 2018); Human Rights (HAM): Teaches the importance of respecting human rights and their role in social and political life (Rahmawati, 2020); 3) Pluralism and Multiculturalism: Encourages students to understand the importance of fostering harmony and respecting differences within Indonesia's diverse society (Hidayah, 2020).

In the implementation of teaching, PPKn/Civics Education teachers are expected to apply interactive approaches such as discussions, debates, and simulations to encourage students to think critically and apply civic values in daily life (Alfiandra & Sani, 2018). This approach aims not only to enhance students' theoretical understanding of Pancasila and citizenship but also to shape their character and social skills necessary to become active and responsible citizens.

Integrating a Life Skills approach in teaching Civic Education (PPKn) is essential in helping students not only understand theoretical concepts but also develop practical competencies to live as active and responsible citizens. The Life Skills approach in PPKn aims to nurture students' critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and interpersonal skills, alongside their civic and ethical awareness.

Several key elements of the Life Skills approach can be integrated into PPKn instruction:

1. **Active Participation:** Encouraging students to engage in real-life scenarios such as simulations, debates, and discussions on national issues promotes deeper understanding and application of democratic principles. According to Sutrisno (2018), these participatory methods enable students to practice democratic values such as active citizenship, fairness, and the importance of social participation in a democratic society.

2. Contextual Learning: The Life Skills approach emphasizes situating learning within real-world contexts. By exploring current events, human rights, and social justice issues through the lens of Pancasila, students can relate abstract concepts to their daily lives (Rahmawati, 2020). This approach fosters a more meaningful learning experience and strengthens students' problem-solving abilities as they connect theoretical knowledge with practical applications.
3. Collaboration and Social Skills: The Life Skills approach emphasizes the development of communication, collaboration, and empathy. Hidayah (2020) highlights the role of group work in PPKn, where students discuss issues such as pluralism and multiculturalism, helping them appreciate diversity while honing social skills. These experiences promote teamwork, conflict resolution, and negotiation, which are essential in both civic participation and community building.

Critical Thinking and Responsibility: The focus on critical thinking through Life Skills encourages students to evaluate and discuss social issues thoughtfully. By questioning, analyzing, and debating topics like human rights or democracy, students are prepared to make responsible decisions as citizens (Prasetyo, 2016). This cultivates their ability to act in accordance with ethical standards and societal expectations, as well as take responsibility for their actions in a democratic society.

Thus, the Life Skills approach in PPKn not only supports students' academic growth but also prepares them for practical challenges in their roles as citizens, ready to engage in the democratic processes and contribute to the well-being of society. Through active learning, collaboration, and real-world problem-solving, students develop the skills they need to thrive both inside and outside the classroom.

## METHOD

This study applied the Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach. CAR is a type of research conducted to address classroom learning problems directly, aiming to improve and enhance the quality of both the learning process and its outcomes. As explained by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), CAR is carried out through a series of cycles, including planning, action, observation, and reflection.

In this study, the main focus is to improve students' learning outcomes by implementing a specific innovative learning model. The research involves teachers as both practitioners and researchers, making this approach participatory and collaborative (Arikunto, 2015).

### **Research Stages**

#### **a. Planning**

The researcher develops an action plan by selecting a learning model [insert example of learning model] relevant to students' issues, preparing learning materials, and setting success indicators.

#### **b. Action**

The action is carried out as planned during classroom teaching and learning activities. The teacher implements strategies designed to address the identified problems.

#### **c. Observation**

The researcher observes students' activities, teacher-student interactions, and collects data, including student worksheets, test results, and field notes. According to Sugiyono (2015), observation in CAR aims to collect data that provides a clear picture of the effectiveness of the action.

#### **d. Reflection**

The collected data is analyzed to evaluate the success of the actions. The results of this reflection are used to design the next cycle with necessary improvements.

This study is designed in two cycles, each consisting of the above stages. This aligns with the principle proposed by Hopkins (1993), which states that CAR is a spiral process where each stage is repeated to achieve optimal results.

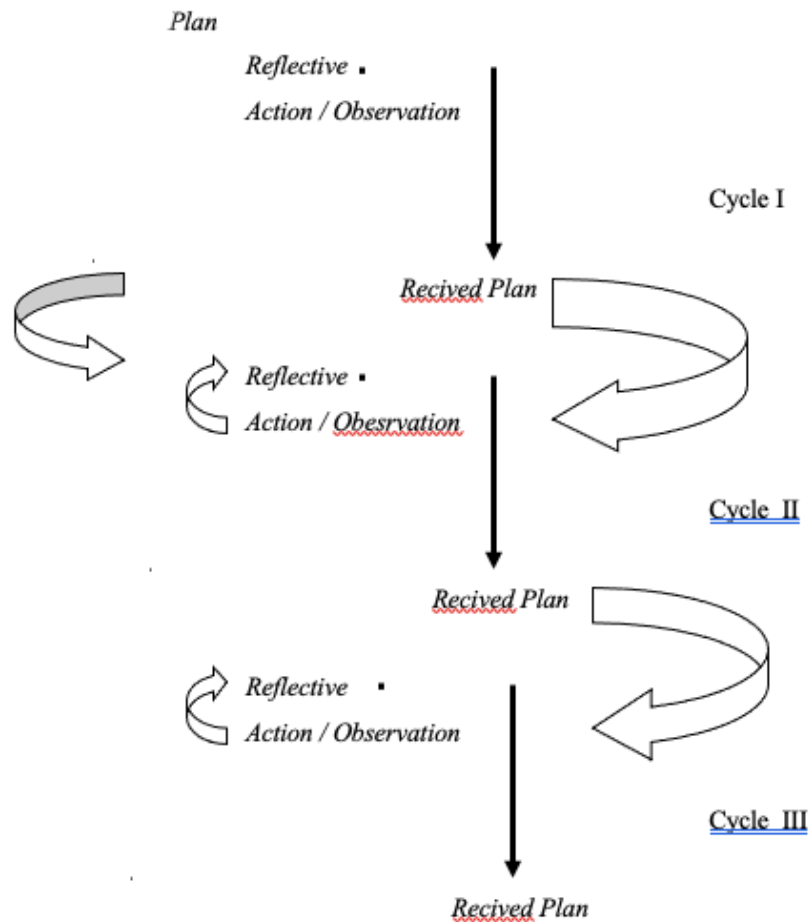


Figure 3.1. School Action Flow Research

1. Plan: is the plan of action what is done to improve, increase or change behavior and attitude as a solution.
2. Action: is what researchers / principals do as an effort to improve, improve or change desired.
3. Observation: is observing the results or the impact of the actions carried out or charged with the teacher.
4. Reflection: is a review researcher, see, and considers the results or impacts of the actions of various criteria.
5. Revision: is based on the results of this reflection, researchers revised the initial plan.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the first cycle, the students' learning outcomes showed a significant improvement. As many as 68% of the students achieved mastery in the tests given, with an average class score of 72.5. Although there were a few students who did not reach the passing threshold, this result indicated that the implementation of the Life Skills approach began to have a positive impact on students' understanding of the material. The average test score shows that most students were able to grasp the lesson, although some needed more attention.

However, in the second cycle, after reflection and improvements based on observations and student feedback, students' learning outcomes improved dramatically. In the second cycle, all students (100%) achieved mastery, with the class average score reaching 85.4. This improvement is very significant and indicates that the adjustments made during the first cycle positively impacted the learning process in the second cycle. Most students who previously did not achieve mastery in the first cycle now showed excellent results, with many of them scoring above 80.

The statistical data regarding the distribution of student scores in both cycles can be seen as the following table:

Cycle	Number of Students	Mastery (%)	Average Score	Score Range
Cycle 1	30 students	68% (20 students)	72.5	60 – 85
Cycle 2	30 students	100% (30 students)	85.4	80 – 95

## Discussion

The implementation of the Life Skills approach in Civics Education (PPKn) has proven to be effective in improving students' learning outcomes, both academically and in their personal development. The remarkable improvement in the second cycle, where all students achieved mastery, demonstrates that this approach facilitates more focused and meaningful learning.

One of the key factors supporting the better outcomes in the second cycle was the changes made after reflecting on the first cycle. In the first cycle, although most students

showed improvement, there were still some who struggled to understand the concepts of Civics Education. Adjustments were made by providing more varied approaches, such as increasing student involvement in group discussions, assigning more practical tasks that connected to real-life contexts, and giving students more opportunities to collaborate and discuss. This proved to enhance their overall learning outcomes.

In the second cycle, while all students achieved mastery, there were notable changes in their motivation and engagement levels. Over 80% of students reported feeling more engaged and interested in the learning material after the Life Skills approach was implemented. This data was obtained from surveys distributed after the completion of the second cycle, which showed that students felt more active and enthusiastic in participating in learning activities. Students who were previously less involved now began to actively discuss, express their opinions, and complete group tasks more efficiently.

This increased involvement was also reflected in the improved quality of group assignments. As many as 90% of the students were able to complete group tasks on time, and most of the group work demonstrated a strong understanding of the material taught. In the first cycle, some groups needed more time to complete tasks, and the results were more varied. However, in the second cycle, nearly all groups were able to complete the tasks on time and with higher quality.

## Analysis

The statistical results and findings from this study indicated that the implementation of the Life Skills approach in Civics Education significantly improved students' learning outcomes. Specifically, the changes observed between the first and second cycles show that the reflection and adjustments made during the first cycle enhanced the quality of learning and the results achieved by students. Below are some key factors that contributed to the improvements:

1. **Active Student Engagement:** In the second cycle, over 80% of students showed increased engagement in the learning process. This was evident in their participation in discussions, group activities, and higher quality assignments. Active engagement was crucial as it increases students' understanding of the material and motivates them to perform better.

2. Contextual Learning: The Life Skills approach, which links the material to real-life situations, such as simulations of elections or discussions on human rights, significantly helped students understand the concepts being taught. This contextual learning made the material more relevant and easier for students to grasp.
3. Enhanced Student Collaboration: In Life Skills-based learning, students were encouraged to work together in groups. This not only improved their understanding of the material but also honed their social skills, such as teamwork, communication, and decision-making.
4. Improved Teaching Methods: In the second cycle, the teacher applied more varied teaching methods, including the use of interactive media, more challenging tasks, and creative learning activities. These methods helped maintain student interest and reinforced their learning.
5. Development of Social and Emotional Skills: Life Skills also helped students develop their social and emotional skills, which are essential for daily life. Skills such as emotional regulation, effective communication, and empathy became more apparent in students' behavior both inside and outside the classroom.

The results of the study align with key educational theories, underscoring the effectiveness of the Life Skills approach. The increased engagement and improvement in student learning outcomes can be explained through Vygotsky's Social Development Theory (1978, p. 57), which emphasizes the role of social interactions in cognitive development. This is evident in the higher participation rates and collaboration observed in the second cycle. Furthermore, the development of social and emotional skills aligns with Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory (1995, p. 42), as students' enhanced communication and empathy led to improved academic outcomes. The integration of real-world tasks that made learning more meaningful reflects Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984, p. 38), where active participation and reflection lead to deeper understanding.

The significant improvement in student engagement and learning outcomes through the Life Skills approach can be explained by Vygotsky's Social Development Theory (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). Vygotsky emphasizes that social interaction is fundamental to cognitive development, and the Life Skills approach takes advantage of this by encouraging collaboration

and active discussion, fostering deeper learning. This approach also aligns with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984, p. 28), which highlights that learners benefit from connecting abstract concepts to real-life experiences, making the material more relevant and engaging.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Life Skills approach in Civics Education (PPKn) has proven to significantly improve students' learning outcomes. The data shows a clear improvement in both mastery and student engagement between the first and second cycles. In the second cycle, 100% of students achieved mastery, with the class average score rising from 72.5 to 85.4. Furthermore, there was a notable increase in student involvement in learning activities, as evidenced by the higher participation rates, greater motivation, and improved quality of group assignments.

The teacher implemented their tasks according to their respective functions. At the beginning of the research, the teacher guided the students more in completing the practical but after a different intervention for high-ability children, then the students with average ability could replace the teacher's role in guiding the group experiencing difficulties in Life Skills Approach.

Through observation, it was found that during the implementation of cycle 1 and continued in cycle II, there were changes, including the optimal implementation of Life Skills Approach, thus achieving the research goal. Life Skills Approach can improve the learning outcomes of Civics Education subjects for X-2 students at SMAN 1 Sukamulia, East Lombok.

## Recommendations

1. Wider Implementation of the Life Skills Approach: It is recommended that the Life Skills approach be more widely applied in Civics Education and other subjects to improve students' life skills as well as their overall learning outcomes.
2. More Varied Teaching Methods: The use of more varied teaching methods, including the use of relevant technology and learning media, can further enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

3. Improved Classroom Management: Effective classroom management, including better group organization and appropriate task distribution, should be considered to ensure that all students are maximally engaged in learning activities.

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