

IMPROVING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS THROUGH INNOVATIVE LEARNING AT SDN 45 BANDA ACEH

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Abstract

Education has an important role in shaping individual character, knowledge and skills, especially in the era of globalization and the industrial revolution. Critical thinking skills are essential in dealing with complex problems, making decisions, and contributing to the development of society. In the educational context, improving critical thinking skills is the main goal, considering the rapid changes in the social, economic and technological landscape. Innovative learning is the key to achieving this goal, considering the diversity of each individual's learning methods. The aim of this research is to determine the improvement of critical thinking skills through innovative learning at SDN 45 Banda Aceh. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive research type. Interview results show that the implementation of a project-based approach and the use of technology has increased student interest and participation. The teacher's role as a facilitator of a supportive learning environment is key in achieving positive results. Good student response and parental support reinforce the value of innovative learning. Despite facing infrastructure and teacher training challenges, ongoing efforts are being made to overcome these obstacles.

Keywords: *Critical Thinking Skills, Innovative Learning*

A. Introduction

Education plays an important role in shaping individual character, knowledge and skills, especially in the era of globalization and the industrial revolution. As time goes by, demands on individuals' ability to think critically are increasing. Critical thinking is the basis for a person's ability to face complex problems, make the right decisions, and contribute to the development of society. In the midst of increasingly fierce global competition, it is important for every individual to have critical thinking skills to be able to compete and adapt to continuous changes. The importance of critical thinking is not only limited to the academic realm, but also in everyday life and the world of work. This ability involves analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application of information from various sources to produce deep understanding. In the educational context, improving critical thinking skills is the main goal, considering the rapid changes in the social, economic and technological landscape. Innovative learning is the key to achieving this goal, considering the diversity of each individual's learning methods (Gunada, 2021). Innovative education includes a variety of methods, approaches and technologies designed to increase the effectiveness of learning (Wartini, 2021). The application of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education, such as e-learning, project-based learning, and collaborative methods, provides new opportunities to design engaging and relevant learning experiences (Budiarti & Airlanda, 2019). Innovative learning is not just about the use of technology, but also about approaches that build critical thinking skills (Pratama & Mardiani, 2022).

However, despite the great potential that innovative learning has, there are still a number of challenges that need to be overcome. Some of these challenges involve teachers' lack of understanding of the concept

and implementation of innovative learning, limited availability of technological infrastructure, and resistance to change in the traditional education system (Rahmawati et al., 2022). Therefore, it is necessary to carry out in-depth research to explore effective ways to improve critical thinking skills through innovative learning. This research also has relevance in a global context, where educational challenges and opportunities are not limited by geographic boundaries. Sharing best practices in improving critical thinking skills through innovative learning can be a positive contribution to the development of a more adaptive and responsive education system (Vera & Wardani, 2018). Therefore, a deep understanding of the relationship between innovative learning and improving critical thinking skills is very important. In line with the development of previous literature and research, there is an understanding that innovative learning can open the door to exploring students' potential for creativity and analysis. However, there has not been much research that specifically explores how innovative learning aspects can be integrated effectively in improving critical thinking skills. Therefore, this research attempts to fill this gap by exploring in depth the interaction between innovative learning and improving critical thinking skills.

Through a better understanding of this relationship, it is hoped that guidelines and recommendations can be found for educators, policy makers and educational practitioners to design and implement more effective learning strategies. In addition, it is hoped that this research can provide conceptual and empirical contributions to our understanding of how innovative education can have a positive impact on the development of critical thinking skills, which in turn can prepare individuals to face future challenges. In the national context, the government has

demonstrated a commitment to developing the education sector, especially through the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum. However, further efforts are still needed to optimize the potential of innovative learning in achieving critical learning goals. Therefore, it is also hoped that this research can contribute to the educational policy context at the national level by providing better insight into the role of innovative learning in improving critical thinking skills at the basic education level. Improving critical thinking skills through innovative learning is not only about preparing individuals for the academic world, but also about creating citizens who are able to contribute to an increasingly complex and dynamic society. Therefore, this research is the first step to explore the potential of innovative learning in shaping the future of education that is better, more inclusive, and more adaptive to global change.

B. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach. Nursapiah Harahap (2020:7) said, "Qualitative research is research that originates from an inductive thinking pattern, which is based on objective, participatory observation of a social phenomenon." Based on the opinion above, it can be interpreted that Qualitative research is a research approach rooted in an inductive mindset, where this methodology originates from objective and participatory observations of certain social phenomena. This approach emphasizes a deep understanding of the context and meaning of observed social phenomena, exploring the various perspectives, values and experiences of individuals or groups involved in these phenomena.

This type of research is descriptive. According to Muhammad Ramdhan (2021:7), "Descriptive research aims to provide descriptions,

explanations and validation of the phenomenon being studied." Based on the opinion above, it can be interpreted that

Descriptive research aims to provide detailed descriptions, in-depth explanations, and validation of the phenomena being investigated. With a focus on systematic and representative data collection, this research methodology is designed to describe the characteristics, proportions, distribution and relationships between variables related to this phenomenon

C. Finding and Discussion

1. Result

To know improving critical thinking skills through innovative learning at SDN 45 Banda Aceh, researchers conducted interviews. The following are the results of the interview:

1. How is the implementation of innovative learning at SDN 45 Banda Aceh carried out to improve students' critical thinking skills?

Answer:

The implementation of innovative learning at SDN 45 Banda Aceh is carried out through a number of approaches. First, we introduce a project-based teaching method that gives students the opportunity to explore and apply their knowledge in real contexts. Additionally, the use of technology in learning, such as the use of interactive learning software and access to online resources, has become an integral part of every lesson. These steps are designed to stimulate creativity and build students' critical thinking skills.

2. What is the teacher's role in facilitating the development of critical thinking skills through innovative learning?

Answer:

The teacher's role is very important in facilitating the development of critical thinking skills through innovative learning. They not only act as transmitters of information, but also as facilitators and leaders in creating a supportive learning environment. Teachers are involved in guiding discussions, designing learning projects, and providing constructive feedback to encourage students to think deeply. Apart from that, teachers also support technology integration and align innovative learning with curriculum needs.

3. How do students respond to innovative learning, especially in developing critical thinking skills?

Answer:

Student responses to innovative learning are very positive. They show greater interest in learning and participate actively in creative activities. Students report that innovative learning gives them the freedom to explore new ideas, collaborate with peers, and develop their critical thinking skills. Survey and interview results show that students feel more motivated and better prepared to face learning challenges.

4. Are there any challenges or obstacles faced in implementing innovative learning to improve critical thinking skills at SDN 45 Banda Aceh?

Answer:

Although the implementation of innovative learning provided positive results, we also faced several challenges. One of them is the limited availability of technological infrastructure, especially in

environments that are not yet fully connected to the internet. Some teachers also experience difficulties in developing innovative learning materials and require additional training. However, ongoing efforts are being made to address these challenges through infrastructure improvements and staff training.

5. What is the role of parents in supporting the development of their children's critical thinking skills through innovative learning approaches?

Answer:

The role of parents is very important in supporting the development of children's critical thinking skills through innovative learning. We hold regular meetings with parents to explain the concept of innovative learning, its benefits, and how parents can get involved. Parents are also given access to online learning platforms so they can follow their children's progress and provide additional support at home. By involving parents, efforts to improve children's critical thinking skills become more holistic and integrated.

2. Discussion

Based on the interview results, it can be seen that the implementation of innovative learning at SDN 45 Banda Aceh is carried out through a number of approaches designed to improve students' critical thinking skills. The first approach is the introduction of project-based teaching methods, where students are given the opportunity to explore and apply their knowledge in real contexts. This step aims to stimulate creativity and build critical thinking skills through direct

experience. Additionally, the use of technology is an integral part of every lesson. Teachers implement interactive learning software and provide access to online resources. This is intended to provide a more interesting and engaging learning experience, while supporting the development of students' critical thinking skills through the use of technology. The teacher's role in facilitating the development of critical thinking skills through innovative learning is key.

Teachers not only act as transmitters of information, but also as facilitators and leaders in creating a supportive learning environment. They are involved in guiding discussions, designing learning projects, and providing constructive feedback to encourage students to think deeply. Teachers also support the integration of technology in learning and align innovative methods with curriculum needs. Student responses to innovative learning are very positive. Students show greater interest in learning and participate actively in creative activities. They feel innovative learning gives them the freedom to explore new ideas, collaborate with friends, and develop critical thinking skills. Surveys and interviews show that students feel more motivated and ready to face learning challenges. Although the implementation of innovative learning provides positive results, there are several challenges faced. The limited availability of technological infrastructure, especially in environments that are not yet fully connected to the internet, is one of the obstacles.

Some teachers also experience difficulties in developing innovative learning materials and require additional training. However, ongoing efforts are being made to address these challenges through infrastructure improvements and staff training. The role of parents is very important in supporting the development of children's critical thinking skills through innovative learning approaches. Regular meetings are held with parents

to explain the concept of innovative learning, its benefits, and how parents can get involved. Parents are also given access to online learning platforms so they can follow their children's progress and provide additional support at home. By involving parents, efforts to improve children's critical thinking skills to become more holistic and integrated in the context of innovative learning approaches at SDN 45 Banda Aceh.

D. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, the researchers concluded that in the implementation of innovative learning at SDN 45 Banda Aceh, several approaches were taken to improve students' critical thinking skills, such as project-based teaching methods and the use of technology. The teacher's role is very important in facilitating this learning, not only as a transmitter of information, but also as a facilitator of a supportive learning environment. Student responses to innovative learning were positive, showing greater interest and active involvement in creative activities. However, there are challenges such as the availability of technological infrastructure and the need for additional training for teachers. The role of parents is recognized as a key element in supporting children's innovative learning, with regular meetings and access to online platforms to understand children's development and provide support at home. Continuous efforts are being made to overcome these challenges and improve students' critical thinking skills.

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