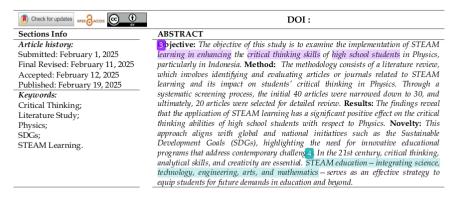


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A Comprehensive Analysis of STEAM Learning Implementation to Foster Critical Thinking Skills for Equitable and Quality Physics Education in High Schools

Lailatul Fajriati*, Hanan Zaki Alhusni, Rahmatta Thoriq Lintangesukmanjaya Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia



INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is marked by a pressing need for quality Human Resources (HR), with an emphasis on understanding and utilizing science and technology to evaluate their impacts on the natural and social environments of communities (Usmeldi et al., 2017). In contrast, Indonesia struggles with its education quality, lagging behind many ASEAN nations. To address this issue, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) program has been introduced to enhance the welfare of the population, particularly in the educational sector (Usmeldi, 2016). The government employs a strategy aimed at producing high-quality Indonesian human resources through integrated educational initiatives that focus on enhancing education quality. The SDGs are instrumental in achieving various government programs (Nurfatimah et al., 2016). Consequently, the education sector is challenged to develop students into creative, innovative, intelligent, and globally competent individuals (Suganda, 2021). To meet these expectations, students need to develop four key competencies: effective communication, collaboration with peers, critical thinking skills to address challenges, and creativity (Kurniawati, 2022).

Indonesia faces significant challenges regarding the quality of its education system, particularly when compared to other ASEAN nations. In response to these issues, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) program has been implemented to enhance the welfare of the population, with a particular focus on education (Humaida et al., 2020). Specifically, SDG number 4 aims to provide inclusive, equitable, and quality education, as well as promote lifelong learning opportunities for individuals of all ages.

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