

Lifelong Learning as a Lever for Moral and Democratic Value

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Abstract. *This paper qualitatively examines the book Lifelong Citizenship: Lifelong Learning as a Lever for Moral and Democratic Value by Dorit Alt and Nirit Raichel, using a literature review approach with content analysis. The findings from six chapters are presented as research results and then analysed to formulate arguments from the reviewer's perspective, supported by relevant references. The book offers a strong conceptual framework for bridging two significant domains: lifelong learning and democratic citizenship. Based on the analysis of six chapters, the reviewer concludes that the concept of lifelong learning is highly relevant to citizenship studies when linked to 21st-century competencies. The reviewer agrees that dimensions such as personal well-being, digital literacy, learning through experience and practice, and social cohesion, inclusion, and justice are closely related to the goals and needs of contemporary citizenship education. Furthermore, the reviewer finds the concept of learning through real-life community practice and assessment for learning particularly compelling. Nevertheless, the discussion draws on authors and findings from European Union countries and the United States, necessitating adaptation to the cultural context of Asian countries, especially Indonesia. Therefore, this paper emphasises that not all practices described can be easily implemented in every country due to differences in resources and educational policies.*

Keywords: Lifelong Learning; Moral Citizenship; Democratic Values; Citizenship Education

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tujuan dan kebutuhan pendidikan kewarganegaraan kontemporer.

Abstrak. *Makalah ini secara kualitatif menelaah buku Lifelong Citizenship: Lifelong Learning as a Lever for Moral and Democratic Value oleh Dorit Alt dan Nirit Raichel, menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan pustaka dengan analisis isi. Temuan dari enam bab disajikan sebagai hasil penelitian dan kemudian dianalisis untuk merumuskan argumen dari perspektif penelaah, didukung oleh referensi yang relevan. Buku ini menawarkan kerangka konseptual yang kuat untuk menjembatani dua domain penting: pembelajaran sepanjang hayat dan kewarganegaraan demokratis. Berdasarkan analisis enam bab tersebut, penelaah menyimpulkan bahwa konsep pembelajaran sepanjang hayat sangat relevan dengan studi kewarganegaraan ketika dikaitkan dengan kompetensi abad ke-21. Penelaah setuju bahwa dimensi seperti kesejahteraan pribadi, literasi digital, pembelajaran melalui pengalaman dan praktik, serta kohesi sosial, inklusi, dan keadilan sangat terkait dengan*

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran Seumur Hidup; Kewarganegaraan Moral; Nilai-Nilai Demokratis; Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan

Introduction

Civic education (hereinafter referred to as PKn) is always closely related to global socio-political dynamics and developments in digital technology (information and communication). This reality requires that citizenship be defined as an active process of lifelong learning, rather than a narrow interpretation limited to the legal status of the relationship between the state and its citizens. Based on this, civic education is understood narrowly (in the Citizenship Education Continuum, referred to as the minimal level) and focuses on basic knowledge of citizenship. This approach is thin, exclusive, and tends to be elitist, because it places citizens as passive recipients of information. Civic education in this model is synonymous with civics education, which emphasises memorisation of concepts, government structures, and formal rules (Kerr, 2011).

Ideally, citizenship education should not only emphasise cognitive aspects, but also moral dimensions, social cohesion, digital citizenship adaptation, and continuous learning processes (referred to as maximal in the Citizenship Education Continuum). This process must feature a thick, inclusive approach to citizenship education that is oriented towards citizens' active role. This model views students as agents who can contribute to democratic life. The focus is on citizenship education, which comprehensively develops citizenship capacity, including knowledge, values, skills, and formal participatory commitment. The author attempts to link the maximum continuum of PKn with the concept of lifelong citizenship, which emphasises the development of citizenship capacities throughout life, not only during formal schooling. This concept emphasises that becoming an active, critical, and responsible citizen is a process that continues to develop throughout life.

However, several previous studies tend to separate lifelong learning and civic education. In fact, civic education is still largely normative and focuses on formal education, such as teaching democratic values through the curriculum (Yunita et al., 2025). Ironically, it does not explore the process of civic learning in non-formal, informal, or even lifelong contexts. In addition, many studies have not integrated contemporary issues such as digital literacy, social justice, and cultural diversity into efforts to strengthen citizen competencies in the 21st century. In fact, studies on civic education that shape lifelong citizenship are important to conduct as instrumental references. In Indonesia, this is still rarely done, although the author found one paper that had examined it. The findings clearly state that if civic education is implemented as part of lifelong education, the expected outcome is the formation of intelligent, skilled, and characterful citizens who are active and responsible as citizens in accordance with the values of Pancasila and the constitution. The formation of civic awareness does not occur only in youth or formal education but continues throughout life, so that citizenship becomes part of the lifestyle of citizens in a dynamic society, nation, and state (Trihastuti & Fajar, 2020).

Unlike in developed countries, lifelong learning has been studied extensively, and there are even special journals dedicated to this topic. One of them is the International Journal of Lifelong Education, published by Taylor & Francis, available at www.tandfonline.com/journals/tled20. One of the publications the author found related to this article is a harsh critique stating that the concepts of lifelong learning and active

citizenship often appear in higher education policies, but many remain rhetorical. Therefore, concrete steps are needed so that these principles are truly integrated into higher education practices (Walters & Watters, 2001).

In addition, there is a book titled *Education for Democratic Citizenship: A Lifelong Learning Perspective* by César Bîrzéa, which emphasises that education for democratic citizenship (EDC) must be a lifelong learning process that involves schools, families, communities, and public spaces. EDC is not just a subject, but a holistic approach to building an inclusive and participatory democratic society (Bîrzea, 2000). This concept is also found in other studies that emphasise that citizenship education needs to integrate lifelong learning with the development of citizens who can participate in a pluralistic and global society (Deakin Crick & Joldersma, 2007).

Based on this general overview, the book *Lifelong Citizenship: Lifelong Learning as a Lever for Moral and Democratic Values* by Dorit Alt and Nirit Raichel (Alt & Raichel, 2017) presents a new paradigm. This book offers a conceptual and practical framework for the principles of lifelong learning that can be systematically integrated. These principles emphasise four main dimensions, namely personal stability, digital literacy, experience-based learning, and social cohesion and justice. This book provides a practice-based approach to citizenship education, making it both theoretically relevant and applicable in higher education.

The main novelty of this book lies in its study, which bridges the two important domains of lifelong learning and democratic citizenship in a single integrated framework. The authors, Alt and Raichel, emphasise that lifelong learning is not only an adaptive strategy for individuals (oriented solely towards the world of work after completing formal education), but also an ethical and social foundation for the sustainability of democracy. Furthermore, this book discusses efforts to strengthen modern citizenship education, support lifelong learning, and is relevant for developing critical, moral, and democratic citizens in the context of a digital and multicultural society. Moreover, only 6.84% of Indonesia's population is digitally literate out of a total of 278.69 million people (komdigi.go.id, 2023).

Based on the above explanation, this paper examines the book's content, which will be discussed in each chapter. The initial systematic approach is to present the content of each chapter of the book, which will then be discussed based on the reviewer's perspective in interpreting the text. Critical reviews, both supportive and complementary to the study, are taken from scientific journals relevant to the topic. A review of the book's applicability in Indonesia will also be provided.

This study identifies several research gaps. Existing discussions of citizenship education often separate lifelong learning from civic formation, or address democratic participation without sufficiently examining the pedagogical processes that sustain it over time. In addition, studies on digital citizenship often emphasise safe and effective technology use, but pay less attention to critical judgement, power relations, public reasoning, and democratic responsibility in digital spaces. A further gap concerns context: although the lifelong citizenship framework has been developed meaningfully in

international scholarship, its relevance for Indonesia remains underexplored, particularly regarding cultural diversity, educational inequality, and the need to connect Pancasila-oriented civic formation with contemporary democratic and digital challenges.

The contribution of this paper is threefold. First, it offers a more integrated conceptual reading of lifelong citizenship by bringing together transformative citizenship, democratic pedagogy, and critical digital citizenship as the main analytical lenses. Second, it strengthens the argumentative structure of the introduction by clarifying the movement from social phenomenon to educational problem, theoretical gap, conceptual novelty, and research objective. Third, it contributes a contextual interpretation for Indonesia by showing how the book's framework can inform citizenship education that is morally

Research Method

This study employed an interpretive qualitative review design in the form of a critical book review. As a critical book review, this paper does not merely summarise the book's content but evaluates its arguments, conceptual structure, assumptions, and contextual relevance for citizenship education, particularly in relation to lifelong learning, democracy, and digital society. The interpretive orientation was used because the analysis focused on meaning-making, conceptual interpretation, and theoretical reconstruction rather than on measurement or statistical generalisation. The primary source was the book *Lifelong Citizenship: Lifelong Learning as a Lever for Moral and Democratic Values* by Alt and Raichel (2017), while secondary sources included journal articles, scholarly books, and relevant policy literature on lifelong learning, transformative citizenship, democratic pedagogy, and critical digital citizenship. Data collection was conducted through close reading, note-taking, and systematic comparison between the book's chapter-by-chapter arguments and the wider literature.

The analysis was conducted in several stages. First, open coding was used to identify key concepts, recurring ideas, evaluative claims, and chapter-level arguments appearing in the book and in supporting sources. Second, axial coding was applied to connect these initial codes into broader categories, such as personal wellbeing, democratic dialogue, digital literacy, experiential learning, and social justice, and to relate them to the theoretical lenses used in this paper. Third, thematic synthesis was undertaken to integrate these categories into higher-order interpretive themes and critical arguments. In organising the analytic process, this study draws on Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis to develop patterns of meaning across the material and on Miles and Huberman's interactive model to structure data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2014). To strengthen trustworthiness, the analysis employed source triangulation, conceptual cross-checking against related scholarship, and careful alignment among claims, textual evidence, and references.

Results and Discussion

The rapidly changing world (technology, cultural differences, global politics) means that education must also change to keep pace. The goal of education is not only to be

intelligent, but also to be a good and caring person. The author of this book introduces the concept of lifelong citizenship, namely, citizens who continue to learn throughout their lives, in various contexts (formal, informal, and non-formal), so that they can live together in a digital, democratic, and dynamic society. The concept of lifelong citizenship does not end after citizens graduate from formal education (from primary to higher education) but continues as a lifelong learning process. Of course, this must be built on the foundation of democratic and moral values. With this approach, citizens will not only be able to survive in a complex world but also become agents of social change. The main idea of the book is that citizenship is a lifelong process of continuous learning, not just during formal education. There are four important dimensions of lifelong learning:

1. Personal Wellbeing

Knowing oneself is an important first step in the learning process, as individuals need to understand their strengths and weaknesses, desires, and the values that guide their lives. This awareness forms the basis for building a strong and authentic identity. Furthermore, civic education shapes the ability to choose and weigh options, especially when faced with dilemmas that may conflict with moral values. This process helps individuals develop ethical attitudes and a sense of responsibility in every decision they make.

2. Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is very important in this era of information sophistication, where various insights, news, opinions, and socio-political interactions now take place through digital media, especially social media. In this context, citizens are not only required to be able to sort through the information that is circulating, such as criticism, insults, or hoaxes, but also to use technology wisely to participate in social and community life.

3. Learning to Learn by Experience and Practice

Learning does not come only from theory but also requires direct experience and practice in social life, accompanied by deep reflection. This approach encourages active learning through projects, discussions, and experiments that enable learners to develop real skills and contextual understanding. In this process, educators (including teachers, lecturers, mentors, and tutors) play an important role as facilitators, creating collaborative learning spaces and supporting citizens in becoming independent learners.

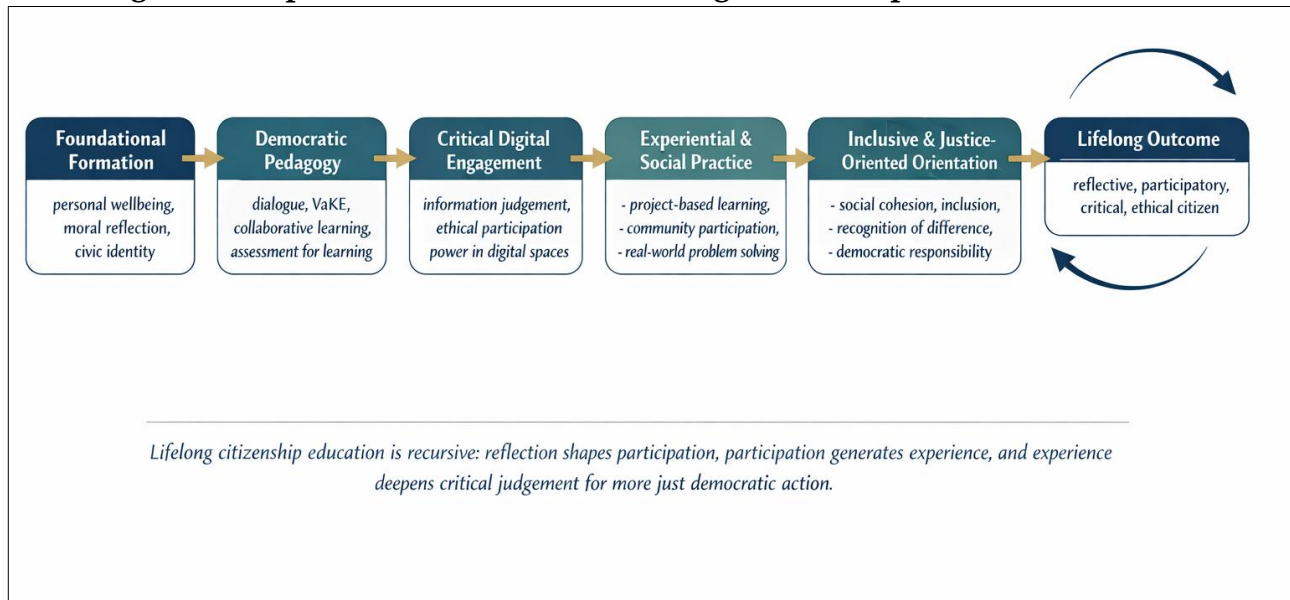
4. Social Cohesion, Inclusion, and Justice

Social cohesion, inclusion, and justice are important pillars of citizenship education. This process emphasises the development of mutual respect between individuals and groups, as well as tolerance for differences in religion, ethnicity, culture, and identity. In addition, empathy is needed towards groups that are often marginalised (in this study, often referred to as “the other”), such as people with special needs, vulnerable groups, and immigrants, so that they can participate fully in community activities.

Alt and Raichel present a fundamental argument that lifelong learning should be viewed as a means of shaping holistic and reflective democratic citizenship. Conceptually, this is an important contribution, broadening the meaning from (merely) an understanding of the political system to a process of personal formation through practical

experiences of citizenship in a democracy, such as in Indonesia. The importance of adult citizenship education in the context of lifelong learning for maintaining democracy and participation (Shah, 2020). The critical analysis is outlined below. To better understand the proposed framework for lifelong citizenship education, see Figure 1.

Figure 1. Proposed Framework for Lifelong Citizenship Education



Source: Author's Work (2026)

Lifelong Citizenship Education

Regarding the four dimensions discussed, the first is that personal well-being, which emphasises the process of becoming a citizen, requires not only an understanding of rights and obligations, but also self-awareness and personal moral maturity. This dimension is considered effective for understanding and expanding the concept of citizenship, which is not only static/legal but also involves lifelong participation (Ferguson, 2020). However, this dimension risks becoming too abstract or even individualistic if it is not strongly linked to collective social action, for fear that it will be understood too narrowly.

The dimension of digital literacy discussed is very relevant to the current situation (often referred to as digital natives), in that digital citizens need critical and ethical skills, not just operational technical skills. Nevertheless, the discussion of technological access inequality (between developed and developing countries or between urban and rural areas) and algorithmic bias (internet users being presented with many unwanted displays) as forms of digital injustice has not been sufficiently explored to find solutions. This could be an important gap that warrants further exploration in other studies.

The experiential learning dimension, using methods such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, and dilemma-based dialogue (VaKE), is a concrete example of how citizenship education can be brought to life through active participation. The reviewers strongly agree with this. Although the implementation of this model certainly requires the readiness of teachers/lecturers/mentors/tutors, a flexible curriculum, and a democratic

learning culture. This is not easy to implement widely, especially in education systems that are still centralised and oriented towards results measured by written tests (such as in Indonesia, where written exams are a requirement for graduation).

The dimensions of social justice and inclusion in this book are commendable because they successfully make multicultural pedagogy an integral part of citizenship education (Mukmin & Sihaloho, 2024). It encourages students' active involvement in cross-community social projects. However, it should be noted that diversity in the context of the European Union (the background against which this book was written) may have different lifestyle dynamics compared to that of Asian countries, such as Indonesia. There are cultural differences between Western, Middle Eastern and Eastern countries. Therefore, local adaptation of this approach is essential to avoid cultural generalisation.

These four dimensions are the main strengths of the concept offered, as they provide a holistic view of citizenship. Policies and strategies are needed to create a culture of lifelong learning at the national level, including social aspects and personal well-being in line with the vision of sustainable citizenship (Lithoxoidou et al., 2021). However, the description of these four dimensions is still theoretical and does not fully explain their limitations. For example, there is no exploration of how conflicts between these dimensions may arise in practice, such as the dilemma between individual freedom (personal well-being) and collective interests (social cohesion). For example, sometimes citizens who are well-established in terms of personal rights (economic, education, social strata) are reluctant to socialise or get involved in the community.

There is similar research that reinforces this book's findings, one of whose findings provides a method (Composite Index, Participation Survey/Adult Education Survey consisting of PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) and Adult Education Survey (AES) in the European Union) and challenges in measuring lifelong learning participation to see how much society has adopted lifelong citizenship (Rubenson, 2019). It should be noted that this concept still needs to be tested in contexts other than the European Union and the United States of America so as not to appear Euro-US-centric. Therefore, this paper reminds us that not all the practices described can be easily applied in all countries due to differences in resources and education policies.

VaKE (Values and Knowledge Education) Dialogue Method

The VaKE (Values and Knowledge Education) method involves discussing moral dilemmas through values-based learning. The use of dialogue as a democratic practice is highly relevant, especially in this era of digital polarisation. Democratic dialogue in an organisational context can be used as an analogy for how dialogue (in schools/universities/public spaces) can encourage participation, reflection on values, and personal and social growth (Kalliola et al., 2006).

However, it should be noted that the effectiveness of this method is highly dependent on national policy, higher education curriculum, regional policy, teacher/lecturer skills, and student readiness. The authors of the book have not sufficiently

explored the structural obstacles that may be encountered when implementing VaKE in an educational context with an authoritarian or conservative curriculum. In addition, the discussion is mostly based on the context of teachers/lecturers and students/university students, which may not be representative of the dynamics of classes that are more socially and economically heterogeneous (such as non-formal education). The reviewer did not find this method to be effective when applied outside the scope of formal education (community-based citizenship practices and non-formal education).

Digital Literacy Builds Democratic Citizenship

Digital literacy is not only technical but also ethical and critical, and its main strength is that it emphasises that technology can be a tool for empowering citizens. Fundamentally, citizenship literacy skills enable learners to actively participate in the life of the state, especially in recognising the interdependence between the life of the nation and the state (Nuryadi & Widiatmaka, 2023). Digital literacy skills must be balanced with individual competencies so that they can lead to the development of individual and social character. Technical skills, critical understanding, and communication skills are competencies that can be used for the formation of individual and social character, including in the digital space (Tetep, 2019).

Even so, discussions about digital challenges such as echo chambers, surveillance capitalism, or the digital divide are still broad in nature. The reviewers have not found in-depth studies on digital access inequality or algorithm manipulation as part of citizenship injustice in the technological era. There has not even been a study on whether there is digital access inequality within a country (countries with low levels of digital access, such as developing countries), because well-utilised digital access will certainly influence the growth of democratic attitudes.

The concept of digital literacy described above would be better if it were linked to the nine dimensions of digital citizenship, which cover important components that shape ethical, safe, and responsible digital citizen behaviour. These dimensions include: digital access as technological equality; digital commerce, which emphasises security and online transaction literacy; digital communication related to communication ethics in the digital space; digital literacy as the ability to understand, use, and evaluate digital information; digital etiquette, which regulates manners and positive behaviour in the virtual world; digital law regarding compliance with digital rules and laws; digital rights and responsibilities related to the rights and obligations of internet users; digital health and wellness that highlights physical and mental health in the use of technology; and digital security that emphasises data protection and device security. These nine dimensions provide a comprehensive basis for modern digital citizenship education and practice (Ribble, 2015).

Lifelong Citizenship Practices

Alt and Raichel describe active learning methods such as project-based learning, problem-based learning, and outdoor learning as strategies for shaping reflective and responsible citizens. This approach is very much in line with the 21st-century learning paradigm. This is also reinforced by findings that citizenship education can focus on real-world practices in schools and communities that build social and moral capacity (Lithoxoidou et al., 2021). It is also in line with the topics of the book *Dialogue, Social Cohesion, and Learning by Experience*, which states that hands-on practice is necessary in educating citizens' capacities so that the impact will be more tangible. Quantitatively, there are research findings that students' perceptions of 21st-century skills predict the level of success in lifelong learning at a "high" level (Gündüz, 2023). Recent research surveys indicate that these learning experiences have a positive impact on students' personal development, civic values, awareness, digital skills, and social responsibility (Sellami et al., 2025). This paper certainly reinforces previous research that civic activities (including political ones) are beneficial for their current and future knowledge, skills, and civic engagement (Amadeo et al., 2002).

However, after reading the contents of this chapter, no solutions have been found to systemic obstacles such as a curriculum that is too results-oriented, frequently changing policies, a monotonous learning culture, or resource disparities between schools (public and private). In the context of developing countries or education systems that are still centred on written examinations as the final test to determine graduation (as in Indonesia), this approach is still difficult to implement (Sari & Noor, 2022). Thus, the claim of the universality of this method needs to be reviewed through further study. However, the reviewer strongly agrees with this practice, because being a good citizen is not limited to space and time.

Social Cohesion, Inclusion, and Justice

This approach still seems optimistic and does not anticipate conflict or resistance to diversity. For example, how would students or teachers/lecturers/tutors/mentors react to values of inclusion that conflict with their cultural or religious beliefs? This topic focuses more on micro interventions (learning in the classroom), without reviewing macro policies (curriculum or other education policies) that are often the main obstacles to inclusion. In fact, political inclusion or political equality is essential to ensure prioritised equality, namely in relation to various opportunities that must be truly available equally in a democratic country (Tamara Lenard, 2024). Even in 2002, research by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement had already explained that tolerance, the desire to participate, and an understanding of responsibilities and rights are important elements of citizenship in a democracy (Amadeo et al., 2002). The ethical competencies required for citizens to be democratic include practising empathy, responsibility, moral thinking, and dialogue skills. These competencies are cultivated in schools, universities, and families (Veugelers, 2019).

Studies related to social cohesion will also be more interesting when linked to digital literacy. The interconnection between digital literacy education and digital ethics can help prevent social polarisation and strengthen social cohesion as part of social justice and inclusion. Social cohesion is a cooperative attitude, both within and between community boundaries, without coercion or being driven by self-interest. Cooperation that is not forced and not driven by personal interests throughout society will result in peace and prosperity even if it is realised in different ways. The existence of sub-groups and relationships between sub-groups, as well as the attitudes of sub-group members towards each other and towards society as a whole, still demonstrate cooperation that is not forced (Burns et al., 2018).

Assessment of Civic Education Learning Outcomes

Offers a more formative, participatory, and reflective approach to assessment for learning. This idea is highly relevant, as assessment is a powerful tool in determining the direction of learning. The use of peer and self-assessment also aligns with democratic principles in education. However, the challenges or experiences of its implementation are not discussed. For example, in education systems heavily oriented towards national exams (especially in developing countries), such ideas can be rejected or minimized. Furthermore, the authors fail to highlight the risk of bias when power or personal ties can influence assessment results.

Table 1. Four Main Factors of the Lifelong Learning Measurement Scale (LLMS)

No	Factor	Description
1	Intrinsic motivation to learn	The internal drive to continue learning.
2	Self-management skills	The ability to manage time, resources, and the learning process.
3	Social and collaborative skills	The ability to work together and share knowledge.
4	Orientation towards reflection and innovation	The ability to evaluate learning and find new ways to develop.

Source: Author's Work (2026)

Overall, Lifelong Citizenship is an important contribution to the literature on the challenges of our time that require integrating values education, technology, and active participation. The following year, research findings consistent with this book's analysis were released. One example was the results of a sample of 161 countries worldwide, spanning the period 1970–2013. Empirical findings noted that educational indicators significantly influence the course of democracy (Apergis, 2018). Research has also found a link between lifelong learning and democratic culture, demonstrating that it strongly supports a participatory and responsible democratic society (Kessels, 2019). These findings reinforce the notion that lifelong learning encompasses not only economic aspects but also moral and democratic ones, as discussed in Alt & Raichel's book.

The findings of this book certainly encourage practitioners of citizenship education to reconsider the importance of education not merely as status, but as the development of

caring, just, critical-thinking citizens who can live peacefully with others. This cannot be achieved with a single method or teacher/lecturer/mentor/tutor, but must be part of a lifelong education system. Citizen participation does not end upon graduation from formal education (followed by employment or marriage) but becomes a continuous learning habit that engages the heart, mind, and concrete actions. By strengthening moral skills, dialogue, digital literacy, real-life experiences, social justice, and a supportive assessment system, civic education can shape a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also caring toward others, resilient in their adaptive learning, and responsible as part of a democratic society. Adaptation of Concepts in Civic Education Studies.

Personal Wellbeing in the Study of Pancasila-Based Character Education

In this book, personal well-being is seen as a crucial component for active and responsible citizens. Dorit Alt emphasises that personal well-being is not only about mental health, but also connected to moral values, life purpose, and social participation. Adaptation to Indonesian Civics studies by implementing Pancasila-based character education emphasising the values of divinity, humanity, unity, deliberation, and justice (Anugrah & Rahmat, 2024), while adapting to technological advances. Civics needs to integrate learning that fosters self-control, empathy, and a sense of purpose in life, so that students are not only academically intelligent but also possess a strong moral compass. This includes personal self-reflection and ethical discussions on current issues such as corruption, tolerance, and the environment.

The VaKE Method for Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

This book introduces Value and Knowledge Education (VaKE), a method that combines values-based learning with critical exploration of knowledge. Students are encouraged to find ethical solutions through moral dilemma scenarios. VaKE is adapted to Indonesian Civics studies to promote HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills), fostering analytical, evaluative, and creative thinking. Educators create Pancasila dilemma scenarios, for example, by asking, "How do I balance freedom of expression with social media ethics?" and "How do we respond to differences of opinion/criticism from people/groups with differing political views?" Students then seek information, debate, and formulate ethical decisions, so that learning is not just rote memorisation but also trains critical thinking. This is evident in research on this approach in higher education, namely the Development of a Self-Regulated Learning Model through HOTS-Based Portfolio Activities in Higher Education (Herianto et al., 2024).

Digital Literacy in Fact-Checking and Critical Thinking Activities

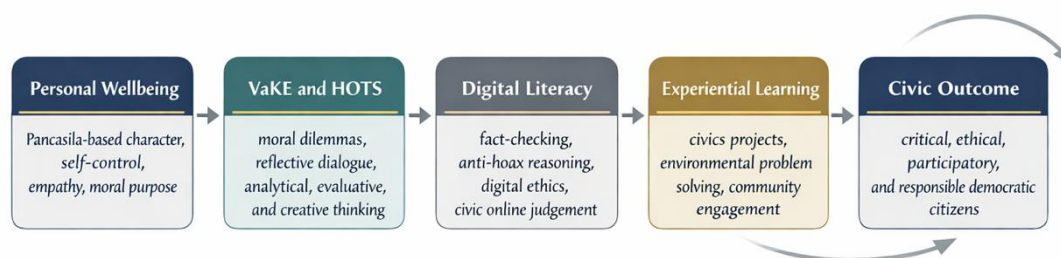
Alt & Raichel highlight the importance of digital literacy as a 21st-century citizen skill. They emphasise the need to be critical of information, combat misinformation, and develop civic online reasoning. Adaptation to Indonesian Civics studies involves familiarising students with fact-checking, source verification, and digital ethics. This can

be practised by analysing hoaxes, hate speech, and disinformation related to political issues or ethnicity (SARA) (Zulmawati, 2025). Teach digital ethics grounded in Pancasila values (for example, respecting differing political views online).

Conceptual Synthesis of Lifelong Citizenship

The synthesis of the six chapters shows that lifelong citizenship can be understood as an integrative civic formation process that links personal development, democratic interaction, digital agency, experiential learning, social justice, and reflective assessment into a continuous learning trajectory (Alt & Raichel, 2017). Rather than treating these elements as separate themes, this review finds that they operate as mutually reinforcing dimensions. Personal well-being provides the ethical and reflective foundation of citizenship; dialogue functions as the democratic pedagogy through which values are tested and negotiated; digital literacy extends citizenship into technologically mediated public life; experiential learning translates civic knowledge into practice; social cohesion and justice orient citizenship towards inclusion and equality; and formative assessment sustains self-reflection, accountability, and growth. In this sense, lifelong citizenship is not simply a collection of competencies but a conceptual synthesis of moral formation, participatory learning, and democratic action across formal, non-formal, and informal contexts. To aid understanding, see Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Contextual Adaptation of Lifelong Citizenship for Indonesian Civic Education



Adapted to Indonesian civic education through Pancasila values, democratic dialogue, and real-life community practice.

Source: Author's Work (2026)

Reconstruction of Theory

This review reconstructs the theory of lifelong citizenship by positioning it at the intersection of three major perspectives. First, transformative citizenship shifts the focus of citizenship education from adaptation to critical social transformation, so that citizens are not only prepared to fit into society but also to question injustice and act ethically to improve it. Second, democratic pedagogy explains the educational process by which this

transformation becomes possible: through dialogue, participation, collaborative inquiry, and reflective judgement, rather than transmission-based instruction. Third, critical digital citizenship expands the scope of citizenship by recognising that democratic participation now also takes place in digital environments shaped by misinformation, unequal access, algorithmic influence, and contested public discourse.

When these three perspectives are brought into dialogue with the four dimensions identified by Alt and Raichel—personal wellbeing, digital literacy, experiential learning, and social cohesion, inclusion, and justice—a reconstructed theory emerges: lifelong citizenship is a continuous, participatory, and critical process through which individuals develop moral agency, democratic capacity, and digital responsibility throughout the life course. This reconstruction moves the argument beyond description by clarifying the theoretical relationship among self-formation, pedagogy, participation, and justice in contemporary citizenship education.

Table 2. Proposed Framework for Lifelong Citizenship Education

No	Framework Component	Explanation
1	Foundational formation	Personal wellbeing, moral reflection, and civic identity become the starting point for responsible citizenship.
2	Democratic pedagogy	Dialogue, VaKE, collaborative learning, and assessment for learning provide the process through which citizens learn to reason, deliberate, and evaluate values.
3	Critical digital engagement	Digital literacy is expanded into critical digital citizenship, including information judgement, ethical participation, and awareness of power in digital spaces.
4	Experiential and social practice	Project-based learning, community participation, and real-world problem solving connect civic learning with action.
5	Inclusive and justice-oriented orientation	Citizenship is directed toward social cohesion, inclusion, recognition of difference, and democratic responsibility.
6	Lifelong outcome	The expected result is a citizen who is reflective, participatory, critical, ethical, and capable of acting across changing social and digital contexts.

Source: Author's Work (2026)

Viewed in this way, lifelong citizenship education is not linear but recursive: reflection shapes participation, participation produces new experiences, experience deepens critical judgement, and critical judgement reorients citizens toward more just democratic action. This framework is therefore useful not only for interpreting the book but also for guiding future conceptual studies and contextual adaptations in citizenship education, especially in settings such as Indonesia, where democratic learning, cultural plurality, and digital transformation must be addressed simultaneously.

Conclusion

The book *Lifelong Citizenship* makes an important contribution to the discourse on 21st-century education by offering an integrative framework for lifelong learning and for realising a citizenship education with a 'maximum' continuum. The strength of this book

lies in its holistic and progressive approach, with dimensions of personal wellbeing, digital literacy, learning to learn through experience and practice, and social cohesion, inclusion, and justice, all closely related to the goals and needs of current citizenship education. It exemplifies how citizenship education can be transformed into a vibrant democratic space that empowers citizens as subjects. However, this book also has limitations. The ideas in the book are formulated within a specific socio-cultural and political context (the European Union and the United States of America) that may not be suitable for direct application in all regions, including Indonesia. Furthermore, some topics do not sufficiently explore the structural and cultural challenges that can hinder the implementation of these ideal concepts, such as resistance to diversity, inequality in digital access, or educational assessment systems oriented towards exam results. Therefore, critical reading and contextual adaptation are necessary if these ideas are to be implemented. Conceptually, this book presents a new paradigm that provides an important contribution for educators, policy makers, and observers of civic education who are serious about preparing citizens to continue learning, growing, and contributing to democratic life.

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