



**Persepsi Mahasiswa Pendidikan Keguruan tentang Integrasi
Literasi Kesehatan di Kelas**

**Teacher Trainees' Perceptions of Health Literacy Integration in
Classrooms**

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ABSTRACT

Health literacy plays a critical role in education. Incorporating health literacy into educational programs improves students' ability to make knowledgeable health decisions and supports a better and healthier lifestyle. This study aims to unveil the attitudes, preparation, and obstacles or resources that teacher-training students have while including health literacy in their lessons. It seeks to ascertain their opinions on encouraging health-conscious classrooms, their level of preparedness to use health literacy, and the obstacles or facilitators to its successful use. This study emphasizes the value of incorporating health literacy into teacher preparation programs, stresses the roles that educators play in raising health awareness, and makes recommendations for changes to educational policies. With a focus on the senior year of Indonesian Language Education majors at the Faculty of Education, this qualitative study incorporated semi-structured interviews with five Lecturers and fifteen randomly selected students from Indonesian Language Majors. The study found that real-world health subjects encourage engagement, and health literacy improves student well-being by encouraging healthy practices that improve focus and learning. A lack of resources can make students less confident when researching content, therefore they require courses that are structured and have defined strategies. Integration is difficult due to time restrictions, but tools such as online resources and guest lectures, as well as cross-disciplinary inclusion, can promote successful learning.

Keywords : Health-literacy, Health conscious, Classroom integration, Perception

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ABSTRAK

Literasi kesehatan memainkan peran penting dalam pendidikan. Integrasi literasi kesehatan ke dalam program pendidikan dapat meningkatkan kemampuan siswa untuk membuat keputusan kesehatan dan mendukung gaya hidup yang lebih baik dan lebih sehat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji sikap, kesiapan, dan hambatan atau sumber daya yang dimiliki oleh para mahasiswa calon guru dalam memasukkan literasi kesehatan ke dalam pelajaran mereka. Penelitian ini berusaha untuk memastikan pendapat mereka dalam mendorong kelas yang sadar akan kesehatan, tingkat kesiapan mereka dalam menggunakan literasi kesehatan, dan hambatan dalam penggunaannya. Studi ini menekankan nilai dari memasukkan literasi kesehatan ke dalam program persiapan guru, menekankan peran yang dimainkan oleh para pendidik dalam meningkatkan kesadaran akan kesehatan, dan membuat rekomendasi untuk perubahan kebijakan pendidikan. Dengan fokus pada mahasiswa semester 7 program studi Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia di Fakultas Pendidikan, penelitian kualitatif ini menggabungkan wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan lima Dosen dan lima belas mahasiswa yang dipilih secara acak dari jurusan Bahasa Indonesia. Studi ini menemukan bahwa mata kuliah kesehatan dunia nyata mendorong keterlibatan, dan literasi kesehatan meningkatkan kesejahteraan mahasiswa dengan mendorong praktik-praktik sehat yang meningkatkan fokus pada pembelajaran. Kurangnya sumber daya dapat membuat siswa kurang percaya diri saat meneliti konten, oleh karena itu mereka membutuhkan mata pelajaran yang terstruktur dan memiliki strategi yang jelas. Integrasi sulit dilakukan karena keterbatasan waktu, tetapi alat bantu seperti sumber daya online dan panduan dapat membantu.

Kata kunci : literasi Kesehatan, kesadaran Kesehatan, integrasi kelas, persepsi

INTRODUCTION

Health literacy serves a stern role in education, mainly in the context of health education and its inferences for public health outcomes. The integration of health literacy into educational curricula, along with collaborative efforts between educational institutions and libraries, is essential for equipping individuals with the necessary skills to navigate the complex health information landscape. It incorporates the skills and knowledge one needs to master and utilize health information efficiently. Well-educated individuals are better equipped to recognize and manage health issues (Coles & Coleman, 2010). This finding is further supported by research indicating that health literacy and education indicate positive relationships, where education influences health literacy (Kajanová & Řimnáčová, 2019).

Health literacy should be integrated into the curriculum. Klarare et al. emphasize the importance of embedding academic literacy development within health professions education, which can enhance students' ability to navigate health information (Klarare et al., 2022). Moreover, the role of health literacy extends beyond and encompasses community health initiatives. Suriah and Anwar discuss how health literacy serves as a strategic approach to enhance public health, particularly in preventing the spread of diseases like COVID-19 (Suriah & Anwar, 2022). This highlights the necessity of integrating health literacy into broader educational frameworks.

Health literacy impacts profoundly, as it not only influences individual health outcomes but also shapes public health policies and practices. Nutbeam argues that improving health literacy is essential for effective health education, which ultimately leads to better health outcomes and reduced health disparities (Nutbeam, 2015). This arguably strongly correlates with the fact that teachers have the opportunity to apply and implement health literacy to their students.

The global scheme on integrating health awareness into educational settings reflects an acknowledgment of how dire the role that health literacy is in fostering healthier communities and refining public health outcomes. Health literacy, defined as the ability to access, understand, and apply health information, is increasingly viewed as a vital skill that needs further improvement within educational frameworks. This integration is not merely an educational enhancement but a strategic public health initiative aimed at addressing health disparities and promoting well-being among students and their families.

Nash et al argue that enhancing health literacy in educational settings can lead to improved health behaviors and reduced health inequalities (Nash et al., 2018). This notion is further supported in another study that stated that health literacy competencies among school leaders are essential for the successful implementation of health-promoting initiatives within schools (Dadaczynski et al., 2020). One of the foundational aspects, school leaders and educators are crucial in fostering a culture of health literacy (Kirchhoff et al., 2022).

The COVID-19 outbreak in 2019 has further amplified the urgency of integrating health literacy into education. Lau et al. conducted a study that revealed a significant correlation between the health literacy of school leaders and their ability to manage health-related crises, such as the pandemic (Lau et al., 2022). Thus, equipping students with the skills to critically evaluate health information in promoting healthy behaviors among adolescents (Ayaz-Alkaya & Kulakci-Altintas, 2021).

Health literacy is a multifaceted construct that encompasses the cognitive and social skills necessary for individuals to effectively access, understand, and utilize health information to promote and maintain good health (Nutbeam, 2015). Nutbeam proposed a hierarchical model of health literacy that includes three distinct levels: functional, interactive, and critical health literacy. Functional health literacy refers to the basic skills needed to read and comprehend health-related materials. Interactive health literacy enables individuals to engage in effective communication and apply health information in various contexts. Critical health literacy pose the ability to critically analyze information and advocate for their health needs (Tian et al.,

2020). Educational interventions can enhance both functional and interactive health literacy among students and promote healthier behaviors and decision-making (Peralta et al., 2021).

The role of teachers in promoting student well-being is critical, encompassing mental health awareness, and the creation of a positive school environment. Research indicates that teacher support significantly influences students' mental health and overall well-being (T. Wang, 2023). Moreover, teachers serve as frontline identifiers of mental health issues among students. Teachers play a key role in supporting students' mental health (Kamel et al., 2020). Research by Ohrt et al. indicates that systematic training in mental health can improve teachers' recognition of at-risk students and their subsequent interventions (Ohrt et al., 2020). The interconnectedness of teacher and student well-being is also noted by Bilz et al., who found that teachers' mental health significantly impacts students' perceptions of support, thereby influencing their school-related well-being (Bilz et al., 2022).

Integrating health literacy content into teacher training programs, though necessary, presents several challenges that can hinder effective implementation. One significant issue is the lack of a cohesive and well-structured curriculum that incorporates health literacy as a core component. Ahmadi et al. highlight the need for teachers to recognize their students' health statuses and integrate healthy lifestyle practices into their teaching frameworks (Ahmadi et al., 2020). However, many training programs do not adequately prepare teachers to address these needs, resulting in a disconnect between health education and academic achievement.

The way educators view their jobs in relation to health literacy presents another difficulty. On one hand, teachers receive more training in functional skills than in advanced health topics (Freedman et al., 2011). As a result, teachers may be prepared to teach children fundamental health facts, but they may find it difficult to teach more complicated health literacy subjects, which are crucial for developing students' overall health comprehension. In line, Muscat also noted that teachers frequently feel uneasy about being perceived as health experts (Muscat et al., 2017).

Although it is commonly known that health literacy is crucial for enabling people to make knowledgeable decisions about their health, little is known about how teacher preparation programs equip aspiring teachers to integrate health literacy into the classroom. In particular, not much study has been done on how teacher candidates perceive and experience the integration of health literacy and the pragmatics of creating classrooms that are health-conscious. From a broad standpoint, the existing literature tends to focus on health literacy education, but it frequently ignores preparing aspiring teachers to create health-conscious learning environments in elementary or secondary schools. Closing this gap is essential to

determining how well teacher preparation programs give students the information and abilities they need to advance health literacy.

Understanding teacher-training students' perspectives, experiences, and difficulties in integrating health literacy into classroom practices is the main goal of the study's research questions. First and foremost, the study aims to identify the attitudes, beliefs, and points of view of teacher-training students on the integration of health literacy into their future teaching duties. A fundamental viewpoint on their comprehension and the significance of health literacy in promoting health-conscious classrooms is established by this inquiry. Second, the study explores how teacher-training students learn about and get ready to use health literacy throughout their preparation as teachers. By showing how they relate health literacy to their teaching strategies and the possible influence on their future pupils, this question provides insight into the real-world applications and training they get. The study's final goal is to identify the perceived obstacles and enablers that these students face while integrating health literacy into the curriculum. This question tackles the difficulties in successfully implementing health literacy by identifying both barriers and enablers, providing a basis for possible approaches to get over these issues and improve the health literacy framework in educational contexts.

By analyzing the perspectives and experiences of teacher training students, this study offers important insights into how to incorporate health literacy into teacher training curricula, which could inform and improve teacher education programs. These findings highlight the vital role instructors play in promoting students' health awareness and well-being, and they may have wider ramifications for educational policy and school health efforts. The results of the study may also help policymakers and curriculum designers create plans that give aspiring teachers the abilities and information they need to effectively address health literacy, creating a proactive, health-conscious learning environment that can influence students' decisions and lifestyles for a long time.

METHOD

The perspectives and experiences of teacher-training students about the incorporation of health literacy into classroom practices are investigated in this study using a qualitative research design. Students majoring in Indonesian Language Education at the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training make up the target population. In particular, two senior-year classes (A1 and A2) and two junior-year classes (A1 and A2) are represented among the participants. To ensure diversity in viewpoints while keeping data gathering manageable, 15 students will be chosen at

random from each class using purposeful sampling. Five instructors majoring in Indonesian Language Education will also take part in order to offer supplementary perspectives on how to incorporate health literacy from an educational standpoint.

Semi-structured interviews will be the main method used to gather data because of its adaptability in enabling participants to fully share their opinions and experiences. Ten open-ended questions that are directly related to the research questions will make up the interview protocol. These questions will probe students' opinions on the integration of health literacy, their experiences integrating these practices into their teaching preparation, and the obstacles or enablers they see during the implementation process. Additionally, lecturers will answer a series of interview questions designed to elicit their thoughts and observations regarding student readiness and the difficulties associated with fostering health literacy in the classroom.

Thematic analysis will be used for data analysis in order to find and analyze significant patterns in the information gathered. In order to identify themes pertinent to the research objectives, the replies will be methodically coded, categorized, and interpreted. Member checking, in which participants verify the accuracy of their opinions and experiences by reviewing preliminary interpretations of the data, will be used to increase the validity and reliability of the results. The dependability and credibility of the results will be supported by peer debriefing sessions and audit trails, which will further increase the study's credibility by guaranteeing openness and consistency in the data analysis procedure.

RESULTS

a. Perceived Literacy Integration

Key Findings on Health Literacy Integration Among Teacher-Training Students are categorized into four. Students perceived health literacy as a crucial element in promoting student well-being. They also highlighted engaging methods for integrating health literacy. However, they also noted some challenges faced in the health literacy integration. While still recognized mental health and nutrition as priorities.

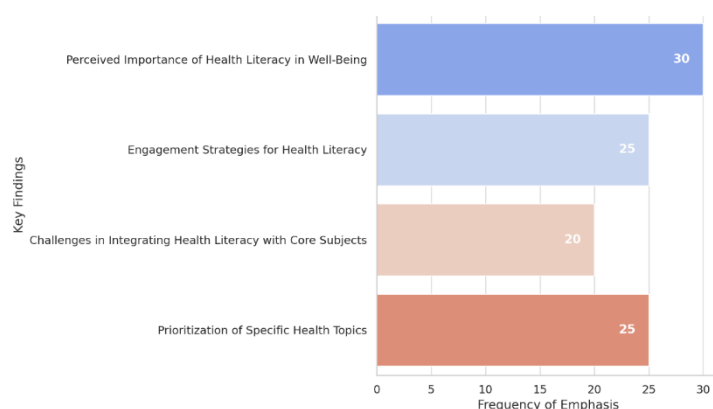


Figure 1 RQ1 Student Interview

b). Health Literacy Integration

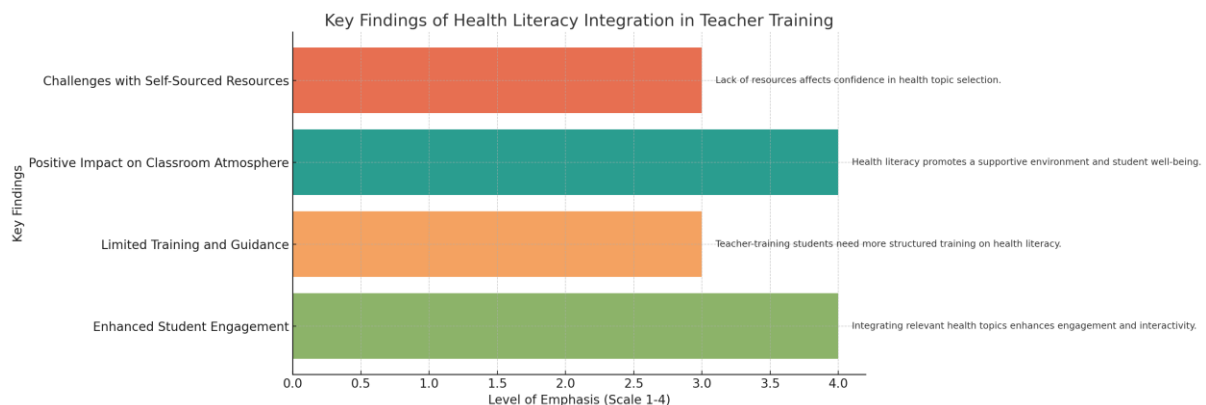
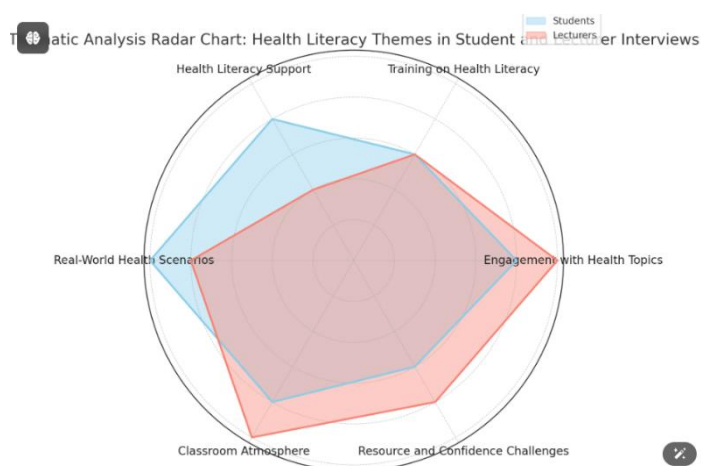


Figure 2 RQ1 Lecturer Interview

Lecturers believe health literacy supports well-being, aiding focus and learning. They also acknowledge integration challenges, particularly in non-health subjects, with time constraints and lack of mandatory health literacy making it difficult to prioritize. Finally, lecturers highlight mental health, stress management, nutrition, and physical activity as essential for student development.

c). Practical experiences and future relation



Data from the interview with students indicated positive engagement through relevant health topics. Students noted that integrating health-related discussions, especially around mental health and lifestyle, boosts engagement. Real-life health topics in tasks, like reading comprehension, allowed students to share personal stories and ask questions, enriching classroom

discussions and learning experiences. In addition, many students felt unprepared and suggested a need for structured training within their program to help identify suitable health topics and approaches. Additionally, they suggested hands-on practice during practicums and feedback on lesson plans involving health topics to gain practical skills for integrating health literacy into various subjects. Lastly, connecting health topics to real-life applications fostered engagement.

d). Challenges and supports in the implementation process

Theme	Students' Observations	Lecturers' Observations
Lack of Formal Training (Barrier)	Limited training leaves students feeling unprepared and unsure how to integrate health topics across subjects.	Lack of professional development limits teachers' confidence in delivering health literacy effectively.
Availability of Online Resources (Facilitator)	Online platforms (WHO, KidsHealth, CDC) provide easy access to materials and adaptable lesson plans.	Online resources from credible health organizations enable adaptability across grade levels.
Time Constraints (Barrier)	Curriculum overload makes it hard to integrate health topics without feeling like an additional burden.	Teachers struggle to balance health topics with existing academic requirements.

Both students and lecturer stated 3 main issues when implementing health literacy integration into a normal classroom, lack of formal training, availability of online materials, and time constraints. Students claimed that limited training leaves them unprepared and unsure of how to integrate health topics across subjects. Additionally, Lack of professional development limits teachers' confidence in delivering health literacy effectively, said lecturers. Both students and lecturers admitted that the availability of online platforms and resources enables adaptability across grade levels. However, due to earlier statements, they lack in how to do that. Lastly, curriculum overload makes it hard to integrate health topics without feeling like an additional burden. Current teachers struggle to balance health topics with existing academic requirements. Thus, it would be hard to implement the programs.

DISCUSSION

Enhancing health literacy among students is vital for their welfare. Educational institutions play a key function by integrating health literacy into curricula. Health literacy is relevant to determining health behaviors. Enhancing health literacy through targeted education and interventions can lead to improved health beliefs leading to positive health-related outcomes (H. Wang & Liu, 2012). Similarly, students with higher health literacy are better equipped to navigate health systems and and engage in health-promoting behaviors (Ran et al., 2018); something educators need when interacting with their students.

Furthermore, it is clear that academic achievement and health literacy are related. According to Evans et al., health literacy was higher among students in higher academic years, suggesting a favorable correlation between health literacy levels and educational achievement (Evans et al., 2019). Thus it is necessary to introduce the concept to children from early ages.

Integrating health-related topics, especially around mental health and lifestyle, significantly boosts student engagement in teacher training programs. By discussing real-life health scenarios, students not only enrich their reading comprehension tasks but also feel motivated to share personal stories, enhancing classroom discussions. However, many students feel they lack adequate training in health literacy and often resort to sourcing materials independently, highlighting a clear need for structured support. To address this, students have suggested incorporating focused workshops and hands-on practice into their programs, particularly during practicums, to gain practical skills in incorporating health literacy. Through real-world applications, like hygiene routines or physical activity's impact on mental health, students found that health-related discussions help them connect learning to everyday life, fostering a deeper, more personal engagement.

On the other hand, the lecturer noted almost similar points of view. Lecturers observed that health-related discussions and the use of characters in literature or discussions on physical activity in persuasive writing helped students connect health literacy to coursework. They also perceived that students frequently lack structured guidance in selecting and integrating age-appropriate health topics, limiting the effectively applying health literacy principles. They also believe that students would respond positively to health topics, noting benefits like stress management tips and practical health strategies that increased their comfort and willingness to engage. Students seem to lack confidence due to a lack of basic knowledge on the issue.

One of the primary dimensions of health literacy is functional health literacy, which focuses on the basic skills required to read and understand health-related materials. Practical experiences in health literacy education, particularly in nursing and health professional training, are crucial for preparing future health-related discussions or interaction. Such training enables healthcare professionals, or teachers in this manner, to recognize and address the health literacy challenges faced by their patients (Budhathoki et al., 2017). However, health literacy is a multifaceted construct that emphasizes personal empowerment and the ability to engage in health-related discussions and decision-making processes. This broader understanding of health literacy is essential for developing educational programs that not only impart knowledge but also foster critical thinking and self-efficacy among patients (Stars, 2018).

Additionally, the effects of health literacy expand beyond personal health outcomes to include more general public health objectives. Health literacy is essential to reaching the third Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), which is to guarantee healthy lives and promote well-being for all people at all ages (Budhathoki et al., 2017).

Implementing health literacy is viewed as beneficial but faced with challenges at the same time. Effective implementation is hampered by the complexity of health literacy, which includes not just reading comprehension but also the capacity to make decisions and navigate healthcare systems (O'Hara et al., 2018). However, research indicates that even motivated healthcare practices find it difficult to consistently adopt health literacy safeguards, indicating that the incorporation of these methods into everyday practice is frequently uneven (DeWalt et al., 2011). Thus, making the implementation is not easy. To tackle the issue, it is suggested to provide specialized health literacy courses, with mentorship from experienced teachers and real-world insights from guest lectures by health experts.

Despite this, respondents acknowledged the fact of the availability of online resources, should they look for one. Teachers or future teachers would be able to equip themselves with health-related knowledge by browsing online and study the material. This in turn will help and facilitate them with the knowledge and skills needed to integrate health literacy in the classroom. In addition, teachers are encouraged to use established resources and provide curated links within training programs for easy access.

In addition, as current teachers face immense curriculum burdens and tasks to get the messages across and administrative work, it is rather unlikely for many to integrate health literacy in the classroom. Much of teachers' time would be consumed for classroom teaching on materials mandated by curriculum and they would not have space to insert another material in the slot. Only very few would make the effort and have the skills to do so. Thus, the integration of health topics within existing subjects (e.g., using health scenarios in reading) and introducing a dedicated "wellness period" can help mitigate the problem.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

To summarize the findings, 6 conclusions have been made. 2 conclusions have been made based on the RQ proposed.

RQ1: Health Literacy's Significance and Worth for Engagement and Well-Being.

1) Health Literacy Promotes the Welfare of Students

Both instructors and students concur that health literacy is essential for wellbeing because it promotes behaviors that enhance concentration and learning.

2) Including Real-World Health Topics Increases Engagement

Students are more engaged and find classes more relatable and engaging when practical health subjects are used.

RQ2: Difficulties with Integrating Health Literacy Training Needs to Be Structured.

3) Students show a need for structured courses with clear strategies, but they need assistance when it comes to incorporating health themes.

4) Confidence Is Affected by Limited Resources

Students who self-source materials are uncertain and want more experience and resources from the curriculum.

RQ3: Breaking Through Health Literacy Obstacles

5) Health Literacy Is Limited by Time

Integrating health literacy is challenging due to curriculum time constraints; incorporating topics into other disciplines could be beneficial.

6) Learning is Facilitated by Health Professionals and Internet Resources

Health themes are made available through online resources and guest lectures, which aid students in modifying lessons for other subjects.

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