

## The Role of Citizenship Education in Shaping Awareness of Democracy and Political Participation in the Digital Era

**Bambang Afriadi<sup>1</sup>, Fitri<sup>1</sup>**

Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf<sup>1</sup>

Correspondence: bambang.afriadi@unis.ac.id

### ABSTRACT

Civic Education (PKn/ Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan) has a crucial role in shaping citizens' awareness and political participation, which is essential for the sustainability of democracy. This research highlights the function of PKn as a conveyor of civic and cultural values, as well as the importance of integrating educational institutions in the teaching system to form democratic future citizens. In addition, the adaptation of PKn to the challenges of globalization and value pluralism is the main focus, including the development of character and morals in accordance with the demands of the times. In the technological era, the aspect of digital citizenship is also a concern, with curriculum evaluations aimed at improving understanding and reducing negative behaviours such as cyberbullying. This research emphasizes that PKn includes not only political and legal aspects but also environmental sustainability and social inclusivity values so as to be able to form citizens who actively participate and be responsible in a democratic society.

### Keywords:

Citizenship Education, Character of the Nation, Rights and Obligations of Citizens, National Resilience, Pancasila Democracy, National Identity

### INTRODUCTION

Civic education has an important role in shaping citizens' awareness and political participation, as well as creating an inclusive and democratic society. According to "(Tolstenko et al., 2019) *Chance of Civic Education in Russia*", civic education functions as a conveyor of civic and cultural values, where educational institutions must be integrated into the teaching system to shape future citizens and maintain democracy. The basic principles of civic education emphasize respect for pluralism and democracy, as well as ensuring neutrality towards certain ethnic cultures. In addition, participation in voluntary organizations and efforts to stop personal monopolies of power are also part of effective citizenship learning.

In facing the challenges of globalization and value pluralism, civic education needs to continue to adapt to the current paradigm. (Cheng, 2020) *A Critical Review of Chinese Theoretical Research on Moral Education Since 2000*," highlighting that in the context of moral education in China, educational theorists have sought to reconstruct a solid theoretical foundation to support further development. This shows that civic education does not only focus on cognitive aspects but also on character and moral development that is in line with the demands of the times. Meanwhile, (Eidhof & and de Ruyter, 2022) propose a civic education research framework that combines the social and political tasks of citizens as well as differentiates different communities based on their level of formality and size.

Civic education also includes the digital aspect, which is increasingly important in the technological era. (Brandau et al., 2022) Evaluate the effectiveness of the Digital Citizenship Curriculum (DCC) in improving the understanding of digital citizenship and reducing cyberbullying among high school students. The results of the study show a significant increase in digital citizenship knowledge and positive acceptance of this curriculum. In line with that, (Budiyanto et al., 2022) emphasize the importance of mapping the development of the digital citizenship curriculum in order to identify three main domains in the maturity phase of technology use. These findings are the basis

for the preparation of a digital citizenship curriculum that is relevant to educational needs in Indonesia.

In addition, other research shows that civic education can be a tool for understanding and developing political tolerance and environmental awareness. Ziemes (2024) revealed that political tolerance among adolescents is influenced by teacher fairness and an open classroom climate, which shows the importance of an educational approach that encourages openness in political discussions. In "*Testing the Simple Model of Environmental Citizenship in a Sample of Adolescents*" (Poškus, 2024) also highlighted that environmental literacy is a key predictor of environmental citizenship, affirming that fact-based education is indispensable to increase the ecological awareness of the younger generation. Meanwhile, (Thorpe et al., 2024) argued that the integration of Aboriginal knowledge in the curriculum can reconceptualize democratic principles and enrich the understanding of citizenship. Therefore, civic education includes not only political and legal aspects but also environmental sustainability and the values of social inclusivity.

### METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore the effectiveness of civic education in increasing political participation and democratic awareness in the digital era. The qualitative approach allows for a deep understanding of social phenomena in their context (Creswell, 2018). The case study was chosen because it allows an in-depth analysis of the implementation of civic education in a specific environment (Herdiansyah, 2011). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers and students, which allowed for an in-depth exploration of their experiences and perceptions (Artaç & Oğurlu, 2024). In addition, participatory observation is carried out to understand classroom dynamics and interactions during the learning process (Biemer & Lyberg, 2003). Analysis of documents, such as curriculum and teaching materials, was also carried out to understand how democratic values and digital citizenship are integrated into learning (Crowley, 2007).

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the triangulation technique of sources and methods is applied, which involves comparing data from different sources and collection methods (Carter et al., 2014). Data analysis was carried out through thematic analysis techniques, which allowed the identification of key patterns and themes related to the effectiveness of civic education (Sid, 2002). This approach helps in understanding how civic education can increase political participation and awareness of democracy in the digital age, as well as the challenges and opportunities faced in its implementation. Thus, this research provides insight into best practices and areas that need improvement in civic education to prepare the younger generation as active and responsible citizens.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Citizenship is generally considered a legal category, but it is just one of many intersecting factors and identities (Bakan, 2023). Citizenship is a manifestation of collective identity. It is the government's recognition of the official position and capacity of individuals to enjoy the rights and benefits associated with that status. Citizenship is also a subjective relationship with national identity (Ruth Chadwick, 2012).

Citizenship includes three (three) statuses: legal status, political actor, and identity. Citizenship as a legal status is considered to be in line with the development

of the idea of the state of law (Winarno et al., 2021). This definition is a type of relationship between the state and law-abiding individuals who have rights and obligations as well as the right to seek legal protection. The Bank defines four categories of connected citizenship (Banks, 2016): (1) Failed citizenship – when people do not absorb the principles of the nation and ethos, feel alienated, and ambivalent about it. (2) Recognized citizenship is when a person or group is recognized, legitimate, and given full rights and opportunities to engage in the state. (3) Participatory citizenship—when people can vote and influence local, state, and global politics. (4) Transformative citizenship—when people are empowered by human rights, social justice, and equality to change policies in violation of the law.

Socially, citizenship is defined through the rights and obligations of citizens towards national politics. Nevertheless, advanced liberalism reshaped citizenship as something active and inspired by the ideals of independence (Woods & Cheshire, 2020). The foundation of democratic education is the idea of citizenship. This essence explains what citizenship is, why it is important for democracy, and how to teach it in representative democracy. The collective body of the people, the citizens of a country, is the source of all authority (the legal basis of all powers). Citizens are full and equal members (Patrick, 1999).

## **Discussion**

In the last decade, many governments have made civic education a mandatory part of the curriculum to promote social cohesion and active citizenship (Willemse et al., 2015). Active civic education and social integration must address cultural diversity in accordance with Dutch policy on civic education (Leenders et al., 2012). The implications of responsible citizenship, as well as advice on how students should be educated in civic competencies in schools (De Schaepmeester et al., 2021). Civic education has always emphasized a formal political interpretation in which participation and involvement are equated with political contributions and responsibilities (De Schaepmeester et al., 2021).

Often, the goal of civic education is to assimilate the younger generation into the national community. This task is opposed in a divided community, especially when the state coat of arms is often debated. Politically, it often emphasizes civic symbols and rites, such as national flags, national anthems, and political institutions. The citizenship curriculum should emphasize the citizenship process to equip the younger generation with concepts, vocabulary, and ideas that allow them to participate in developing what they want (Gallagher & Duffy, 2016).

Civic education opportunities and citizen involvement are rooted in the understanding that civic education is a powerful tool that has the potential to shape the future (Blevins, 2022). There is broad-based agreement in the literature that civic education is necessary to prepare students to live in a democratic system (Yuen, 2016). A sustainable career is one in which an individual enjoys at least a moderate level of productivity, health, and happiness throughout their lifetime. Significant obstacles to realizing a sustainable career can arise throughout the lifetime (Heslin et al., 2020).

Civic education without intercultural education risks neglecting an important part of society, simplifying reality, and failing to address issues related to the specificities of various groups, as well as the challenges and opportunities of diversity (Nestian Sandu, 2015). Without shared values, it is impossible to find a basis for establishing shared values and standards of behaviour in society. In this context, throughout history, various societies have (Toker Gökçe, 2021) produced various

shared values to maintain their existence and maintain national solidarity. One of the limitations of assessing values is that values should not be generalized because they are different from one person to another, culture to another, society to another society, and even one country to another country, so the value study will be different according to the aspects mentioned above (Toker Gökçe, 2021). In the era of globalization that is full of materialism, law enforcement officials face many challenges. They must have a steel attitude, noble morals, and a strong character in carrying out their duties. In this case, law enforcement officials must be strong and ready to face various trials, tests, and temptations that can result in the fall of their authority as law enforcers. Law enforcers must resist the efforts of public figures or other officials who will try to bribe (Directorate General of Learning and Student Affairs, Ministry of Research, Technology, 2007).

Pancasila is placed as part of civic education in a broader and general context. Pancasila is centred on moral education or character education. Strengthening Character Education is a guide for the Ministry of Education and Culture in carrying out the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) in schools, families and communities. Strengthening character education is carried out through a direct approach of teachers and students through intra-curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities at each level of education. In addition, PPK is carried out through a cultural approach (Ministry of Education and Culture Team, 2020). Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious and spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation and state. (Law No. 20 of 2003 Article 1). Article 31 Paragraph 3 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia states, "The government seeks and organizes a national education system, which increases faith and piety as well as noble morals in order to educate the life of the nation, which is regulated by law". Civic education often aims to foster people's knowledge of the nation-state and instil a sense of national identity and loyalty to the nation (Yuen, 2016). It should be remembered here that the current literature while accepting the fact that civic education can help promote national identification, remains vigilant against possible malpractices in the process. The curriculum in Indonesia began in 1975 about civic education and was given the name of the subject Pancasila Moral Education, abbreviated as PMP. Similarly, for the generation of the early 1960s, the term civic education is better known as *Civics*. As for now, based on the 2013 Curriculum, civic education at the primary and secondary education levels uses the name of the PPKn subject as a process of forming a national identity (Directorate General of Learning and Student Affairs, Ministry of Research, Technology, 2007).

Civic education is offered at relevant learning objectives, fostering self-efficacy and planning experiments to achieve possible career sustainability-focused learning goals (Heslin et al., 2020). Assessment procedures seek to ensure that assessment tasks provide direct evidence of student progress towards achieving learning objectives. It includes the development and systematic use of assessment and assessment procedures and the criteria on which they are based (summative assessment). It also includes providing feedback during the learning process to guide and support learning (formative assessment) (Sid, 2002). Active learning is based on the pedagogical principle of learning through activities and aims to provide flexible learning spaces and engaging teaching and learning materials. Learning is

indispensable to realize the promise of education for jobs, higher incomes, health, poverty reduction, and social cohesion (Altinyelken & Hoeksma, 2021).

### CONCLUSION

Civic Education (PKn) has a crucial role in shaping the young generation, which understands their rights and obligations as citizens and appreciates the values of Pancasila as the basis of the state. Through PKn, students not only gain knowledge about the government and legal system, but also instill moral values such as tolerance, justice, and social responsibility. This is in line with the goal of PKn to foster awareness of the nation and state, form good character, and increase legal awareness among the younger generation.

However, the implementation of PKn faces various challenges, such as teachers' lack of understanding of the material and the lack of student involvement in the learning process. To address this, innovative and relevant teaching methods are needed for current social conditions, so that students can be more interested and understand the importance of their role as active and responsible citizens. Thus, PKn can be effective in producing a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also has integrity and commitment to national values.

### References

- Altinyelken, H. K., & Hoeksma, M. (2021). Improving educational quality through active learning: Perspectives from secondary school teachers in Malawi. *https://doi.org/10.1177/1745499921992904*, 16(2), 117–139. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745499921992904>
- Artaç, N. H., & Oğurlu, E. (2024). A Qualitative Study on the Attitudes of Women Politicians Toward Their Roles in Politics: A Case of Northern Cyprus. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1304905>
- Bakan, A. B. (2023). Citizenship. In R. J. Tierney, F. Rizvi, & K. Erkanan (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education (Fourth Edition)* (pp. 38–45). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-818630-5.08019-2>
- Banks, J. A. (2016). Citizenship Education and Diversity: Implications for Teacher Education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 52(1), 5–16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487101052001002>
- Biemer, P. P., & Lyberg, L. E. (2003). *Introduction to Survey Quality* (1st edition). Wiley-Interscience.
- Blevins, B. (2022). Research on equity in civics education. *The Journal of Social Studies Research*, 46(1), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JSSR.2021.12.001>
- Brandau, M., Dilley, T., Schaumleffel, C., & Himawan, L. (2022). Digital citizenship among Appalachian middle schoolers: The common sense digital citizenship curriculum. *Health Education Journal*, 81(2), 157–169. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00178969211056429>
- Budiyanto, A., Nugroho, L. E., & Santosa, P. I. (2022). *Identification of Important Factors in Digital Citizenship Learning Curriculum*. 209–214. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ISEC54952.2022.10025120>
- Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. J. (2014). The use of triangulation in qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 41(5), 545–547. <https://doi.org/10.1188/14.ONF.545-547>

- Cheng, H. (2020). A Critical Review of Chinese Theoretical Research on Moral Education Since 2000: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2096531119886490>, 2(4), 561–580. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2096531119886490>
- Creswell, J. W. (2018). Mixed Methods Procedures. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, pg 418.
- Crowley, K. (2007). The literature review—Not sinking, writing. *Supervising Doctorates Downunder: Keys to Effective Supervision in Australia and New Zealand*, 208–214.
- De Schaepmeester, L., van Braak, J., & Aesaert, K. (2021). Teach what you preach? The relationship between teachers' citizenship beliefs and citizenship education in the classroom. *The Journal of Social Studies Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jssr.2021.10.001>
- Direktorat Jenderal Pembelajaran dan Kemahasiswaan Kementerian Riset, Teknologi, dan P. T. R. I. 2016. (2007). *BUKU AJAR MATA KULIAH WAJIB UMUM PENDIDIKAN KEWARGANEGARAAN*.
- Eidhof, B., & de Ruyter, D. (2022). Citizenship, self-efficacy and education: A conceptual review. *Theory and Research in Education*, 20(1), 64–82. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14778785221093313>
- Gallagher, T., & Duffy, G. (2016). Education for Citizenship Education and Social Justice in Northern Ireland. In A. Peterson, R. Hattam, M. Zembylas, & J. Arthur (Eds.), *The Palgrave International Handbook of Education for Citizenship and Social Justice* (pp. 523–544). Palgrave Macmillan UK. [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51507-0\\_25](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51507-0_25)
- Herdiansyah, H. (2011). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif: Untuk Ilmu-ilmu Sosial*. Salemba Empat.
- Heslin, P. A., Keating, L. A., & Ashford, S. J. (2020). How being in learning mode may enable a sustainable career across the lifespan. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 117, 103324. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JVB.2019.103324>
- Leenders, H., Veugelers, W., & de Kat, E. (2012). Moral Development and Citizenship Education in Vocational Schools. *Education Research International*, 2012, e901513. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2012/901513>
- Nestian Sandu, O. (2015). Civic and Intercultural Education: A Means for Community Development and Attitude Change. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015580371>, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015580371>
- Patrick, J. J. (1999). *The Concept of Citizenship in Education for Democracy*. ERIC Digest. ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, 2805 East Tenth Street, Suite 120, Bloomington, IN 47408; Tel: 800-266-3815 (Toll Free). <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED432532>
- Poškus, M. S. (2024). Testing the simple model of environmental citizenship in a sample of adolescents. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03297-7>
- Ruth Chadwick. (2012). *Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics*. ScienceDirect. <http://www.sciencedirect.com:5070/referencework/9780123739322/encyclopedia-of-applied-ethics>
- Sid, C. (2002). *Evaluation of subject , teaching and research*. 481–489.
- Thorpe, K., ten Kate, L., & Burgess, C. (2024). Reimagining democratic education by positioning Aboriginal Country-centred learning as foundational to curriculum

- and pedagogy. *Curriculum Perspectives*, 44(2), Article 2.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s41297-024-00233-2>
- Tim Kemdikbudristek. (2020). Rencana Strategis Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 2020-2024. *Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset Dan Teknologi*, 1–129.
- Toker Gökçe, A. (2021). Core Values in Education From the Perspective of Future Educators: <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211014485>, 11(2).  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211014485>
- Tolstenko, A., Baltovskij, L., & Radikov, I. (2019). Chance of Civic Education in Russia: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019859684>, 9(3).  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019859684>
- Willemse, T. M., ten Dam, G., Geijssel, F., van Wessum, L., & Volman, M. (2015). Fostering teachers' professional development for citizenship education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 49, 118–127.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.03.008>
- Winarno, W., Muchtarom, M., & Yuliandari, E. (2021). Characterization of Indonesia citizenship in legal perspective. *Jurnal Civics: Media Kajian Kewarganegaraan*, 18(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jc.v18i2.40580>
- Woods, M., & Cheshire, L. (2020). Citizenship and Governmentality. In A. Kobayashi (Ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography (Second Edition)* (pp. 223–228). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-102295-5.10243-4>
- Yuen, T. W. W. (2016). Civic education stuck in a quagmire: A critical review of civic education in Hong Kong?: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/2047173416650447>, 15(2), 69–82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2047173416650447>