

## The Essence of Citizenship Education in Building Students' Democratic Attitude at Cinta Kasih Primary School

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### Abstract

*This research aims to explore and analyze the role of Citizenship Education (PKn) in forming students' democratic attitudes at Cinta Kasih Elementary School. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with a literature study approach that refers to journals, books and other sources that are relevant to the research topic. Through analysis of the content of selected literature, this research identified several important aspects of Civics that play a role in fostering students' democratic attitudes at Cinta Kasih Elementary School. These aspects include: introduction to the concept of democracy, formation of political awareness, development of participation skills, respect for pluralism and diversity, learning through experience, and student empowerment. It is hoped that the results of this research will provide a deeper understanding of the importance of Civics in developing students' democratic attitudes, as well as provide a basis for developing a more effective Civics curriculum and learning strategy at Cinta Kasih Elementary School.*

### Keywords

Civic education;  
Democracy; Student



## I. Introduction

Citizenship education at the elementary school level has a very important role in forming democratic attitudes in students. The essence of this education is not only limited to the introduction of state symbols or knowledge of the government system, but furthermore, citizenship education functions as a solid foundation in building democratic character which is the basis for national and state life. Citizenship Education (PKn) in elementary schools can be a means of forming individual citizens who understand and are able to carry out the rights and obligations to become intelligent, skilled and characterized Indonesian citizens as mandated in Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Ministry of National Education, 2006:97-104).

It is important to understand that citizenship education is not simply about transferring knowledge about government structures or national symbols. More than that, citizenship education is directed at forming students' character and attitudes in accordance with democratic principles. This involves providing a deep understanding of democratic values such as justice, equality, freedom, and participation. Teachers have an important role in providing and developing attitudes and moral values in students in elementary schools. However, this effort will not be successful if students do not understand the basic concept of the value of democracy itself. This concept is actually contained in the Citizenship Education (PKn) subject, which aims to form citizens who understand and implement their rights and obligations as competent, intelligent and moral Indonesian citizens, in accordance with the values of Pancasila and the Constitution. 1945.

According to the applicable law, Citizenship Education is a subject that must be taught to all students at all levels and formal education pathways. Citizenship education, as part of citizenship education, should be given to every Indonesian citizen. The aim of Citizenship Education is to shape students to become members of society, nation and state who can be relied upon by themselves, their families, the environment, society, nation and state in achieving common goals. (Rahayu, 2007).

To form democratic and responsible Indonesian citizens, Citizenship Education (PKn) lessons have a strategic and important role, namely in shaping students and their attitudes in everyday behavior, so that they are expected to be able to become better individuals. Students' interest in learning in the field of Civics needs special attention because interest is one of the factors that supports the success of the learning process. In addition, interest arising from student needs is an important factor for students in carrying out activities or businesses (Susanto, 2013).

Empirical research in the field of citizenship education shows that integrated, relevant and contextual education has a significant positive impact on the formation of students' democratic attitudes. For example, research by Ahn and Yoo (2018) shows that civics programs that provide students with opportunities to participate in election simulations improve their understanding of democracy and political engagement.

Apart from that, citizenship education also functions as a means to develop critical thinking skills, the ability to argue, and tolerance for differences of opinion. This is in line with democratic education theory which emphasizes the importance of developing individual capacity to participate in democratic processes in a constructive and responsible way.

Overall, citizenship education at the elementary school level has significant implications in shaping students' democratic attitudes. By understanding the theoretical and empirical aspects that underlie the importance of education, we can appreciate the role it plays in forming a generation that is competent, active and committed to democratic values in national and state life.

## **II. Literature of Review**

### **2.1 Civic education**

Citizenship education is education that reminds us of the importance of the values of the rights and obligations of a citizen so that everything we do is in accordance with the goals and ideals of the nation and does not deviate from what is expected. Because it is considered important, this education has been implemented from an early age at every level of education, from the earliest to tertiary level, in order to produce competent successors to the nation who are ready to live the life of the nation and state. (Magdalena, I 2020)

According to Soemantri (2001), Citizenship Education (PKn) is an effort that aims to provide basic knowledge and skills to students regarding the fundamental relationship between citizens and the state, as well as preliminary education to defend the country as a form of effort to defend the country in accordance with the mandate stated in the Constitution. 1945 and Pancasila.

Citizenship education is a form of democratic education that aims to prepare members of society to be able to think critically and act democratically. This is done through efforts to instill awareness in the new generation about the importance of democracy as a system that most respects individual rights in society (Saidurrahman,

2018). Aziz Wahab stated that Citizenship Education (PKn) acts as a teaching medium that imparts Indonesian values to students with awareness, intelligence and full responsibility. The Civics program covers various concepts of state administration, politics, state law, as well as other general theories relevant to this goal.

Citizenship Education is a subject which is a series of processes to direct students to become responsible so that they can play an active role in society in accordance with the provisions of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (Madiung, 2018).

## 2.2 Democracy

Democracy comes from Greek, namely from the words "demos" which means people and "kratos" which means government. So democracy is a government whose sovereignty is in the hands of the people. In terms of democracy, it is defined as a form of government that gives each individual a free life but still has to be responsible. According to Harris Soche (in Winarno, 2020) democracy is a form of people's government, therefore the power of government is inherent in the people, the people at large and is the right of the people or the people at large to organize, defend and protect themselves from coercion by other people or bodies that entrusted to rule. According to CF Strong, democracy is a system of government in which the majority of adult members of a political society participate on the basis of a representative system that ensures that the government is ultimately accountable for its actions to that majority. According to the International Commission for Jurists, democracy is a form of government in which the right to make political decisions is exercised by citizens through representatives elected by them and accountable to them through a free election process. There are five clusters in a democratic country according to Frans Magnis Suseno's view, namely as follows:

1. Majority principle
2. Rule of law
3. Guarantee of people's basic rights
4. Community control of government
5. Free general elections

On the other hand, an undemocratic government is a government whose power does not come from the people, does not have legitimacy, is not run by the people, and is not run because of the people. From the four things above, it can be a characteristic of a country whether the country adheres to a democratic system of government or not.

Democracy was born from the diversity of individual interests, therefore John Locke and JJ. Rousseau took the initiative to create a forum in the form of a social contract consisting of two stages, namely:

1. Agreement between communities, which contains agreements between individuals to create a community
2. Agreement to form a government, which contains agreements between individuals to create a government.

## III. Research Methods

In this research the author used a qualitative descriptive method with a literature study approach that refers to journals, books and other sources relevant to the role of Civic Education (PKn) in forming students' democratic attitudes at Cinta Kasih Elementary School. As mentioned by Muhadjir (2000), the literature study approach involves several aspects: first, theoretical analysis of a scientific discipline which can then be strengthened

with empirical evidence to obtain a deeper understanding. Second, studies that try to examine philosophically or theoretically aspects related to research validity. Third, research that focuses on theoretical linguistic aspects. And fourth, studies that examine literary works. The main aim of using this method is to obtain an in-depth understanding and test the validity regarding the impact of Citizenship Education on the formation of students' democratic attitudes at Cinta Kasih Elementary School.

## **IV. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 The Nature of Citizenship Education**

The essence of Citizenship Education in elementary schools is as an educational program rooted in the values of Pancasila, aimed at developing and preserving noble and moral values which are an integral part of national culture. The main goal is to form a strong identity that is reflected in students' daily behavior. Through this lesson, students are prepared to understand and implement their rights and obligations as Indonesian citizens, taking into account diversity in religion, social, culture, language, age and ethnicity. The focus is on forming citizens who are intelligent, skilled and have character in accordance with the teachings of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, so that they can become members of society who contribute positively and responsibly to the progress of the nation and state.

According to Law Chapter 1 Article 1 National Education System No. 20 of 2003, education is a deliberate and planned effort to create a learning environment and learning process that allows students to actively develop their potential. The main aim of this education is so that individuals can have spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and skills needed for the benefit of themselves, society, nation and state. Additionally, according to the opinion expressed in Carter v. Good (1997), education is also a process in which a person develops the abilities and behavior needed in the context of his society. Thus, it can be concluded that education aims to shape individual abilities so that they can develop themselves optimally, so that these abilities can be beneficial for the individual's own life, as well as for broader interests as a citizen and member of society.

According to the Ministry of National Education (2006:49) the aim of Civics learning is to provide the following competencies:

- a. Think critically, rationally and creatively in responding to citizenship issues.
- b. Participate intelligently and responsibly, and act consciously in community, national and state activities.
- c. Develop positively and democratically to shape ourselves based on the characters of Indonesian society so that we can live together with other nations.
- d. Interact with other nations in world regulations directly by utilizing information and communication technology.

And in general, according to Maftuh and Sapriya (2005:30), the goal of the state is to develop citizenship education so that every citizen becomes a good citizen, namely a citizen who has intelligence (civic intelligence), both intellectual and emotional. social, and spiritual who have a sense of pride and responsibility (civic responsibility), and are able to participate in community life. After reviewing the understanding of the objectives of Citizenship Education, it can be concluded that Citizenship Education is oriented towards instilling the concept of Statehood and is also implementable in everyday life.

Apart from the objectives, citizenship education in general, Citizenship Education (PKn) subjects have a function as a means of forming students into citizens who understand

and are able to carry out their rights and obligations, are committed to being loyal to the nation and state of Indonesia by reflecting themselves as citizens who intelligent, skilled and with character in accordance with the mandate of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. This supplement to the development of SD Civics is intended to complement existing printed teaching materials. In this supplement, models, strategies, methods and approaches are developed in the context of elementary school Civics learning which will help teachers express their creativity in front of the class as facilitators.

## **4.2 Citizenship Education to Build Students' Democratic Attitudes**

Citizenship Education (PKn) has a crucial role in forming students' democratic attitudes at Cinta Kasih Elementary School, especially at the elementary school level. In the era of globalization and ever-growing social dynamics, it is important for education to prepare the younger generation to have a deep understanding of democratic values and the ability to participate in democratic life.

As we know, Citizenship Education (PKn) is a subject dedicated to equipping students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become active, participating and responsible citizens in society. One important aspect of Civics is learning about democracy. Democracy is a system of government where political power is in the hands of the people, which is realized through participation, pluralism, protection of human rights, and the supremacy of law.

Dasim Budimansyah (in Sulistyarini, 2015) states that citizenship education is defined as the contribution of education to the development of characteristics that mark it as the contribution of education to the development of characteristics that mark one as a citizen. There are three roles of Civics according to Dasim Budimansyah, firstly, based on the psychopedagogical development approach, namely Civics as a curricular program in formal educational institutions (schools/universities), and non-formal (outside of school), which plays a role as an instrument for cultivating and empowering children and youth according to their potential so that become a good and intelligent citizen (smart and good citizen). Second, based on the socio-cultural development approach, namely Civics as a socio-cultural citizenship movement which plays the role of self-actualization of citizens, both individually and in groups in accordance with their rights, obligations and socio-cultural context, through active participation intelligently and responsibly. Third, based on the sociopolitical intervention approach, namely Civics as a national political education program for state administrators, members and leaders of social organizations and political organizations which is packaged in various forms of fostering civic knowledge, civic skills and civic virtues ( civic disposition).

Based on a juridical perspective, primary, secondary and tertiary education curricula are required to include Citizenship Education (PKn) with the aim of forming students into individuals who have national awareness and love for their homeland in accordance with the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Civics is considered a contributor main role in building national character, which is reflected in three main aspects as stated by Winataputra (2001). First, the content of the Civics curriculum, which has been stipulated in the Decree of the Director General of Higher Education No. 43/Dikti 2006, covers topics such as Pancasila Philosophy, National Identity, State and Constitution, Indonesian Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law, Rights and Obligations of Citizens, Indonesian Geopolitics, and Indonesian Geostrategy. These topics are the basis for forming the character of citizens which will ultimately shape the character of the nation. In line with the demands of the times and developments that continue to change, teachers and lecturers have the responsibility to

develop these materials so that they remain relevant and effective in instilling civic values and democratic attitudes in the younger generation.

Second, the Civics subject in its learning should be seen and treated as a democratic practice. The recommended approach to learning is learning that is more oriented towards critical thinking and problem solving processes. Third, at the same time, the school community environment and the wider community should be conditioned to become a learning place for the "spiral global classroom" (Cogan, 1999: 7). In this case, education in the context of character formation does not only come from educational institutions such as schools or universities, but requires awareness that developing democratic attitudes is the task of all parties, including parents, family members and also the surrounding community. Therefore, cooperation between educational institutions, parents and the community is really needed.

In line with the opinion above, there are several roles of Citizenship Education (PKn) in fostering the democratic attitudes of students at Cinta Kasih Elementary School which are very important and diverse, namely:

#### 1. Introduction to the Concept of Democracy

Through Citizenship Education (PKn) students can introduce basic concepts of democracy, such as human rights, freedom of association, collective decision making, and government based on the will of the people. It helps students understand the basic principles of democracy and the importance of active participation in democratic life.

#### 2. Formation of Political Awareness

Through Civics, students are given an understanding of the importance of having high political awareness in following political developments, understanding social issues, and choosing competent leaders. This helps them become responsible and active citizens in the democratic process.

#### 3. Participation Skills Development

Citizenship Education (PKn) helps students develop participation skills, including the ability to discuss, negotiate, respect other people's opinions, and work together to achieve common goals. This is important in building a democratic culture among students.

#### 4. Appreciation for Pluralism and Diversity

Citizenship Education (PKn) teaches students to appreciate pluralism and diversity in society, including respecting differences of opinion, religion, culture and social backgrounds. This helps encourage tolerance and cooperation between individuals from different backgrounds.

#### 5. Learning through Experience

Citizenship Education (PKn) can use experience-oriented learning methods, such as general election simulations, debates, role playing, or social projects. Through this hands-on experience, students can better understand how democracy works in real life.

#### 6. Student Empowerment

Citizenship Education (PKn) can empower students to have a voice and an active role in their schools and communities. This may include the formation of student councils, citizenship projects, or participation in social activities aimed at improving community well-being.

By implementing these efforts consistently, it can help foster the democratic attitudes of students at Cinta Kasih Elementary School, so that they become responsible, active citizens and care about democratic life in society.

## V. Conclusion

Citizenship Education (PKn) has a very important role in forming the democratic attitudes of students at Cinta Kasih Elementary School. Civics is an educational program rooted in Pancasila values, aimed at developing and preserving noble and moral values which are an integral part of national culture. The main aim is to form a strong identity that is reflected in the daily behavior of students at Cinta Kasih Elementary School, as well as preparing them to understand and implement their rights and obligations as Indonesian citizens, taking into account diversity in religion, social, culture, language, age, and ethnicity. The focus is on forming citizens who are intelligent, skilled and have character in accordance with the teachings of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, so that they can become members of society who contribute positively and responsibly to the progress of the nation and state. Civics also makes a big contribution in forming students' democratic attitudes at Cinta Kasih Elementary School through introducing the concept of democracy, forming political awareness, developing participation skills, respect for pluralism and diversity, learning through experience, and empowering students at Cinta Kasih Elementary School. By implementing these efforts consistently, teachers can help foster democratic attitudes in students at Cinta Kasih Elementary School, so that they become responsible, active citizens and care about democratic life in society.

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